



UNIVERSITY OF AGDER

The Roma People

The effects of discrimination on living standards
A case study of Kristiansand, Norway

Frida Hansen Apelseth

Supervisor

Hege Wallevik

University of Agder, 2013
Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences
Department of Development Studies

The Roma People

The effects of discrimination on living standards
A case study of Kristiansand, Norway

Author

Frida Hansen Apelseth

Abstract

The Roma people are one of the largest minority groups in Europe and also the least integrated one. Due to discrimination and exclusion in their home countries, many Roma choose to migrate to countries such as Norway to earn money, primarily through begging. This thesis stems from a desire to learn more about the living standards of Roma people in Kristiansand and to find out what effect long-term discrimination has had on their lives. In this thesis empirical findings from an interview based qualitative study of 24 Roma informants as well as seven representatives from the support system are presented. The support system includes Christian organizations, churches, a politician from the political party Venstre and private people. Findings are discussed with reference to literature related to living standards of Roma, discrimination against them and policies implemented to reduce discrimination towards this people. I also focus on discussing findings with reference to research on the new poverty, links between discrimination, exclusion and poverty, as well as migration, development and poverty, which also include push and pull factors.

In this thesis I argue that Roma's living standards are heavily impacted by the long-term discrimination and exclusion they have experienced. What is interesting is that in general literature on the Roma people argue for an understanding of Roma as discriminated against and the people supporting Roma in Kristiansand also perceive them to be discriminated against. The Roma people in my study, however, claim that they do not feel discriminated against. One potential cause is that the situation for Roma in Romania is experienced as worse than in Kristiansand. The effects of the efforts that have taken place towards the Roma people in Kristiansand may also contribute to their feeling of not being discriminated against in this particular city. Services provided for in Kristiansand, mainly the sanitation facility and the access to the Salvation Army's welfare center, have enabled Roma to meet daily needs; access to a toilet and a shower facility and access to food and clothing. The support system perceives the services provided for to have worked as intended and that these measures have reached poor people in need and helped increase living standards and well-being. And Roma agree to such an understanding. Having said so, my findings indicate that hierarchical structures within the Roma community in Kristiansand may have an impact on how Roma experience their stay in Kristiansand, access to and use of the sanitation facility and the ability to generate money. Thus beyond the services provided for there are challenges which complicate the picture of how Roma experience being and living in Kristiansand.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to thank my supervisor Hege Wallevik. Your feedback, guidance and encouragement have been invaluable to my work with this thesis.

Secondly I would like to thank the professors, teachers, staff and fellow students at the Development Management program for two interesting years.

This thesis would not have been the same without the Roma people I interviewed. Thank you for giving your time and sharing your stories with me. I am ever grateful.

My interpreter Erika Erdos deserves gratitude for her great help during my fieldwork.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the people I interviewed in the support system; Kari Klingsheim from the Salvation Army, Kolbjørn Gunnarson from the City Mission, Father Christofóros Schuff from the Greek Orthodox Church, Pastor Aud Sunde Smemo from the Church of Norway, politician Dag Vige from Venstre and private people with knowledge on the Roma people. A special thanks to Kari Klingsheim from the Salvation Army for giving her time and knowledge to me, giving me tips and allowing me to spend time at the welfare center.

Last, but not least; I wish to thank my family. The continuous support and belief in me that especially my parents Klaus and Hanne, and my dear Thomas have given me throughout this process have meant a lot. And to everyone else who have believed in me; thank you.

Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	8
1.1 Background and rationale	9
1.2 Objective	10
1.3 Research questions	10
1.4 Relevance for Development Management	11
1.4.1 Human rights and development.....	11
1.5 Methodology in brief.....	13
1.6 Clarification of terminology	13
1.7 Thesis outline	13
2. Contextual background.....	15
2.1 The history and culture of the Roma people	15
2.2 The Roma people in Europe and Norway	16
2.3 Study Area and location	19
2.3.1 Study area: Kristiansand.....	19
2.3.2 Locations: Vestervei Bridge, Markensgate and the Salvation Army.....	19
3. Literature review and theoretical approaches	21
3.1 Living standards	21
3.2 The discrimination.....	23
3.3 Policies implemented to reduce discrimination	25
3.4 Norway and minorities	28
3.5 Theoretical approaches.....	31
3.5.1 The new poverty.....	31
3.5.2 Links between discrimination, exclusion and poverty	32
3.5.3 Migration, development and poverty- the importance of push and pull factors	33
4. Methodology	36
4.1 Research strategy.....	36
4.2 Research design.....	36
4.3 Data collection.....	37
4.3.1 Individual interview.....	37
4.3.2 Contextualising the informants: the Roma people in Kristiansand.....	39
4.3.3 Observation.....	40
4.3.4 Group interview.....	40
4.3.5 Document review.....	41
4.4 Sampling techniques	41
4.5 Entry to the field.....	42
4.6 Limitations.....	43
4.7 Reliability and validity.....	44
4.8 Ethical considerations	45
4.9 Anlysis and discussion of findings.....	46

5. The Roma's view upon living in Kristiansand.....	47
5.1 Generated income, living standards and everyday challenges	47
5.2 Roma's experiences of bad behavior and harassment.....	52
5.3 In search of a job and a way to secure a livelihood.....	55
5.4 Aspirations and thoughts about the future.....	57
5.5 Roma as representing the category new poverty.....	58
5.6 Power relations and hierarchy among Roma in Kristiansand.....	61
6. Roma people and the support system in Kristiansand.....	66
6.1 The supporters and their motivation for working with Roma.....	66
6.2 Perceptions of Roma people's lives in Norway and in Romania.....	68
6.3 The support system's view on mistreatment and harassment	71
6.4 Why the support system sees discrimination	73
6.5 Thoughts about responsibilities of Roma people themselves	74
6.6 Challenges with helping Roma and some ways out of difficulty.....	75
6.7 Private initiative to improve the conditions for Roma	78
7. Responsibilities of authorities and efforts to prevent discrimination...	80
7.1 The role of local authorities	80
7.2 Organized support as a response to perceived needs?.....	82
7.3 Consensus and interaction: is Kristiansand different?	86
7.4 The importance of a human rights discourse in Kristiansand.....	87
7.5 Internal hierarchy amongst Roma: the pitfall of generalizing.....	89
7.6 The intrusive poverty	92
8. Conclusions.....	95
8.1 Potential causes for the discrimination	95
8.2 Summary and concluding remarks.....	98
List of references.....	103
Appendices.....	112

List of tables and appendices

Table 1: Types of challenges.....	p. 49
Appendix 1: The Roma informants.....	p. 112
Appendix 2: List of informants from the support system.....	p. 113
Appendix 3: Qualitative interview guide: The Roma people.....	p. 114
Appendix 4: Qualitative interview guide: The Christian organizations.....	p. 115
Appendix 5: Qualitative interview guide: Father Christofóros Schuff.....	p. 116
Appendix 6: Qualitative interview guide: Politician Dag Vige.....	p. 118

List of abbreviations and acronyms

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
EEA	European Economic Area
EU	European Union
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
HL-Senteret	Centre for studies of Holocaust and Religious Minorities
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRK	Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	the UN Refugee Agency
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
WHO	World Health Organization

1. Introduction

Imagine this; the cold wakes him up early in the morning. It is still dark where he lies under the Vestervei-bridge in Kristiansand. The sanitation facility is now open, he goes there to wash up and hopefully get warm. Will he get something to eat for breakfast today? It is time to go to Markensgate to find his location. It is close to nine, it is daylight outside and there are few people in the streets. Sitting here is extremely cold, it is snowing. How much will he earn today? It is open at the welfare center; today he can go there for some food and some warmth. He sits in the streets with his cup until daylight disappears and people in Kristiansand return home. He has to go to where he lives under the bridge. His children are back home- he misses them. Under the bridge, more Roma are staying. There is a fire, they can make some food. That helps, but he is still freezing. Cold, but exhausted he falls asleep thinking of his children back home. Wonder what they are doing now?

This master thesis is about Roma people who beg in Kristiansand, Norway. The goal with this thesis is to learn about the lives of Roma people, especially concerning discrimination. The representatives from the support system that are involved with the Roma people all express that they perceive Roma as being discriminated against. This view is supported by the literature on Roma people. In this thesis an underlying premise is that Roma are discriminated against, and the focus of this thesis is based on this assumption. Discrimination may be expressed in different ways, but in the case of Roma people it is believed to especially reflect poor access to education, limited employment opportunities, housing possibilities and politics. It is evident that long-term discrimination makes an impact, and ultimately influences people's ability to manage their own lives and have sufficient resources to survive. The other aim with this thesis is to understand how the support system perceives the situation of the Roma people in Kristiansand and to find out what efforts have been put in place to improve the standard of living for Roma in Kristiansand. Another goal was to gain more knowledge about factors that may influence Roma people's lives while they are here and to prevent discrimination. Cultural understanding is a necessary tool for creating the best initiatives and for ensuring that these initiatives targets the most important aspects, and that this in turn actually benefits those that it is intended to help.

1.1 Background and rationale

The Roma people are one of Europe's biggest minority groups (Amnesty International Norway, 16 July 2012) at the same time as it is the least integrated group (Pedersen, 1996, p. 47). The living standards for the majority of Roma people in Europe are low and the financial crisis the continent has experienced seem to have further amplified these challenges. This has contributed to the increased flow of beggars to rich countries like Norway. There is some Norwegian literature on different aspects of Roma people. However, too much focus is external and focused on what the society in general feel about their presence. In the literature review I focus on living standards, discrimination and what policies have been implemented to reduce discrimination and to help Roma. I also briefly discuss Norway and minorities. In the theoretical framework I have been concerned with the new poverty, links between discrimination, exclusion and poverty as well as migration, development and poverty where push and pull factors are emphasized as important. The literature and the theoretical approaches provide a background for what is discussed later in the thesis.

As stated this thesis is based on the premise that Roma as a group are excluded and discriminated against as a people. I was interested to find out how this was reflected in Kristiansand and to account for what is done to improve the situation for this group, and what this in turn can contribute to in relation to overall understandings and strategies for the Roma people.

There is uncertainty related to how many Roma there are in Norway and the size of the population will vary throughout the year. The same applies to the Roma population in Kristiansand, but at the most is it up to 45-50 people (Norsk rikskringkasting AS (NRK), 25 April 2012).

There has been an increase in focus on Roma people, both in the media, from politicians and the general society. It all culminated during the summer of 2012 when Roma, in Oslo in particular, were moved from place to place and debates on the Internet were full of hate. This is the motivation behind this thesis- the realization that a more nuanced debate was necessary, which was based on research. I found little research that focused on the Roma people themselves and especially considering discrimination. What we could read in the media was for the majority the opinions and views of Norwegians. Given that the main focus of this thesis is the Roma people, it was important to find out how they perceive their lives to

be and what their experiences had been with the measures that recently had been implemented in Kristiansand. In order for initiatives to be successful is it important that they acknowledge Roma and listen to what their experiences are.

1.2 Objective

The main objective of this study is to explore the everyday life situation of the Roma people in Kristiansand as seen from both Roma's point of view and from the perspective of the support system working with Roma in Kristiansand. This is done with reference to the Roma people's history of exclusion and being discriminated against, leading to a situation of deprivation and poverty, which again leads to migration in attempts to secure livelihoods. Firstly, I am interested in the Roma peoples' perceptions of their life in general and while staying in Kristiansand. In particular if they themselves experience discrimination? Secondly, I am interested in how organizations, the municipality and people in Kristiansand work towards Roma people to better a difficult life. Furthermore how this support coincides with expressed needs of the Roma people. Lastly, the aim is to contribute to an overall debate on how to work towards Roma in order to secure livelihoods and avoid exclusion and discrimination.

1.3 Research questions

- 1) How do the Roma people in Kristiansand perceive their everyday lives with particular reference to the challenges they are faced with given their history of exclusion and discrimination?
- 2) How do actors comprising the support system towards the Roma community in Kristiansand perceive Roma's situation and what efforts are put in place to help Roma improve their standard of living and quality of life while in Kristiansand?
- 3) How can knowledge of the above shed light on strategies to work towards Roma people to prevent social exclusion and discrimination in Kristiansand and beyond?

1.4 Relevance for Development Management

Poverty is not something that is restricted to developing countries; it can be very much present in rich, developed countries as well. Norway, at the top of the Human Development Index (HDI) (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2013), is experiencing an increased flow of Roma beggars. The country's placements on the HDI, as well as the financial difficulties in many European countries are potential causes for the increase in non-Norwegian beggars. It is increasingly recognized as a new form of poverty when people are poor while living in a rich country. In 2010, the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) was created to identify multiple deprivations that impact people's ability to develop. These dimensions include the individual level of health, education and living standards (UNDP, n. d.). Being this type of poor is not merely a matter of being relatively poor in a rich country. The Roma people are a group of people that are truly poor- in a country that is listed as the best in the world (UNDP, 2013). The attention that beggars have received in Norway, especially over the last years, has highlighted a need to recognize the distress that these people live under- and to investigate why people choose to leave everything to come to a unknown country to beg. What the literature review and the theoretical approaches indicate is the challenges that Roma are faced with. The challenges with new poverty, migration, development and discrimination are good examples as to why this is relevant for Development Management.

Roma people are a group of people that we in Norway have limited knowledge about. That is something that has been evident through debates in the recent years. However, there is now a realization amongst a larger group of people and stakeholders that more information is necessary- not only to have a more nuanced debate, but also in order to better help Roma. Basic development steps are needed to help this group step out of poverty; education, improved living standards, employment opportunities and also self-management.

1.4.1 Human rights and development

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no

distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs (Article 2 of the Human Rights).

The following section attempts to explain why human rights are relevant in the context of Development Management.

The human rights highlight issues that affect many people, Roma people included. We are born free (#1), no one should be treated with torture or hard punishment (#5) and everyone has the right to move freely in a state (#13). These are merely some of the rights we as human beings have, but unfortunately are not granted to all (United Nations (UN), n. d.). When Roma people are evicted from their homes, moved to poor locations, become victims of violence and in many aspects are not accepted for the lifestyle they have, then their human rights are violated.

Human rights and development have in many ways the same interests; improve the lives of people. Human rights are the ground stone for development, and human rights will in many aspects not be fulfilled if development is lacking (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 2006, p. 7).

The Human Development Approach was designed because of the realization that the traditional development approaches were unsatisfactory. This approach, largely affected by Amartya Sen sees great value in enhancing capabilities, freedom and people's ability to choose. Important issues in this approach such as human security, social progress, equity and participation are all important factors, which unfortunately are not sufficiently present in the lives of the Roma people (UNDP, 2010).

What is shown throughout this thesis is that the Roma population in Kristiansand have been lacking basic necessities, both with regards to proper housing, employment and income. This is something that applies to the majority of Roma in most countries. Basic development steps are closely connected with the human rights, and it is only when these are in place that other development steps will fully blossom.

1.5 Methodology in brief

The fieldwork was carried out from January to April 2013 in Kristiansand City, Norway. I have interviewed people from the Roma society in Kristiansand and also talked to organizations and people involved with Roma people from the support system's side. Overall, this study has a qualitative approach and it is based on semi-structured interviews with 24 men and women among the Roma people and also with representatives from Christian organizations and others working towards Roma in Kristiansand. Other methods of data collection that was used are group interview, observation and document review. All of these types of data collection were chosen because I perceived them to be the best ways of answering the three research questions.

1.6 Clarification of terminology

Roma people: Also known as Romani or gypsies, however, the term is used loosely as it in the context of begging might be challenging to distinguish Romani from Romanians. Romani is an ethnic group primarily living in Europe, majority in Central and Eastern Europe (Roma.org, n. d. c).

Discrimination: Often understood as unfair and prejudice treatment of people based on their gender, sexuality or ethnicity (Oxford Dictionaries, n. d. a.).

Power: Here understood as when someone has the ability to impact your decisions or actions (Oxford Dictionaries, n. d.). In this thesis shown by people having the power to decide where a person can beg.

1.7 Thesis outline

Chapter 1 gives an introduction into the topic of this thesis. It accounts for the research questions, research objectives, explains why this topic is relevant for the Development Management study, the methodology in brief and the thesis outline.

Chapter 2 describes the contextual background which contributed to this research. It looks at the history and social aspect of Roma, the Roma people, and the study area for this research.

Chapter 3 is the literature review chapter. This part of the thesis looks at literature that is perceived to be relevant to answer the research questions. This chapter looks into the living standards, discrimination, policies and programs that have been implemented, including an introduction to Norway and minorities. This chapter also reviews the theoretical approaches that were chosen for this thesis.

Chapter 4 reviews the research methodology that was chosen for this thesis. It also gives an explanation of why that particular design, data collection strategy, data and sampling techniques were applied. This chapter offers an introduction into some statistics about the Roma people that were interviewed for this research. It also accounts for how I got into the field, the validity and transferability, limitations, ethical considerations and analysis that were relevant for this research.

Chapters 5 to 7 are the empirical chapters;

Chapter 5 is the first of three empirical chapters, this chapter attempts to answer the first research question about how Roma people in Kristiansand perceive their lives, particularly considering their history of poor treatment.

Chapter 6 is about how the support system perceives Roma's situation and an identification of efforts that are put in place.

Chapter 7 is concerned with the third research question and builds upon what was discussed in the two previous chapters. It attempts to find out how increased knowledge can improve strategies that are aimed to reduce social exclusion.

Chapter 8 offers an analysis of the potential causes for discrimination against Roma people. It also provides summary and concluding remarks for this thesis.

2. Contextual background

2.1 The history and culture of the Roma people

The Roma culture is not a written culture; it is based on generations passing down the culture orally to following generations. The core is the family; this has been vital for the survival of their culture as Roma do not have their own country. The traditions of the Roma are divided into sub- groups such as religion, rituals, family traditions, conflict resolution and the power of the word. These factors are all vital parts of the traditions and culture of Roma people- even today (Rroma.org, n. d. b.).

A consequence of the oral culture of the Roma people is that the knowledge about the early history is limited. However, it is recognized as a fact that the Roma people originate from India. We know this because in Romani one can also find traces from other countries, including India. That way, one can assume that some Roma have been in Pre-Islamic Persia, Russia and Poland. After the origination in India, no trace is found until a small group of Roma occur in Western Europe in the 16th century. Research shows that this is when prejudice originally appeared. The more recent history is depressing; the Roma where discriminated against, persecuted, forced to assimilate, and it all culminated during World War Two when over 0, 5 million Roma were killed (Rroma.org, n. d. a).

During Communism, the Roma people became integrated into the work force. However, after the fall of Communism and Ceaușescu in Romania these improvements were reversed. Strict immigration policies prevented people from migrating. When Visa requirements for Roma were abolished, at the same time as the hand craft skills that were traditional for Roma became redundant, more and more Roma chose to migrate to other countries to find employment or to beg (Senter for studier av Holocaust og livssynsminoriteter (HL-Senteret), October 2011). A large number of the Roma population are illiterate or have little education, this prevents them from finding employment (Renzi, 2010, p. 41).

The Romani legal traditions have been, and still are, important tools to maintain a distinction between Roma and *gaje* (non-Roma), but not only that, it helps to organize the Roma society. Much like the rest of the culture, the legal system relies on oral transmission (Weyrauch and

Bell, 1993, p. 62). When a crime is committed, it is common to distinguish between a crime committed against a fellow Roma or a *gaje*. For example, theft is regarded as a crime if it is committed against another Roma. However; it is not a crime if it is committed towards a *gaje* (Weyrauch and Bell, 1993, p. 52). The Roma court; *kris*, will settle disputes if they are not dealt with outside of the court. The most common verdicts are fines, corporal punishment and the occasional banishment. Should the wrongdoer be convicted to banishment, or *marime* as it is called, that person will be perceived as polluted and therefore no longer welcome in the community. The Roma believe that a person sentenced to *marime* or a *gaje* is so polluted that they will not eat with them, nor touch anything that person has touched in fear of being polluted. The extent of the *marime* extends to the fear of attending that person's funeral, and when alive, entering the host society is rarely an option for the wrongdoer. *Gaje* are traditionally viewed as impure, indecent and their involvement can reduce the magic effectiveness of Roma rituals. Interaction with *gaje* should therefore be limited, both in time and place (Weyrauch and Bell, 1993). The historical treatment of Roma, in addition to the great differences in culture and tradition contributes to the divide between Roma and *gaje*. The majority of interactions with *gaje* have proved that they are unreliable, especially if they proclaim to have Roma's best interest in mind (Weyrauch and Bell, 1993).

2.2 The Roma people in Europe and Norway

The Roma people in Europe consist of 10- 12 million people (Amnesty International Norway, 16 July 2012); this makes them one of the largest minorities in Europe in addition to being the least integrated group. A report from Amnesty International found that Roma people have lower living standards, lower life expectancy, poorer health, higher unemployment rates, as well as lower income than the majority of the population (Amnesty International Norway, 16 July 2012). This is regardless of which country in Europe they are living in. However, it is not unlikely that the gap between those at the top and those at the bottom of the society is higher in richer countries. Given that the majority of Roma live in poverty it is fair to assume that this affects them as well, regardless of which country they are in. 10 per cent of the Romanian population are Roma, 75 per cent of these live in poverty (Amnesty International, 26 January 2010, p. 2).

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) found in a research that the modal educational level for the respondents in their research was six to 9 years of schooling. A person with little or no education is possibly less aware of the types of laws that prevents discrimination, as well as what his or hers rights are. The report shows that the Czech Republic had the highest levels of employment amongst Roma people, and at the other end of the scale were Slovakia and Greece (FRA, October 2009, p. 4). Considering the financial crisis in many European countries is it very likely that these employment rates have decreased.

There is much uncertainty related to the exact number of Roma people in Europe, in fact the figures differ with millions. Wolfensohn and Soros (n. d. a.) operate with between 7 and 9 million. Amnesty International Norway and Roma.org on the other hand operate with a figure between 10 and 12 million (Amnesty International Norway, 16 July 2012 and Rroma.org, n. d. c.). The reason for this uncertainty is that the majority of European countries have no statistics related to ethnicity in relation to social welfare. Why so is, is not certain, but one can assume that the governments are hesitant because of the gloomy history of European racial politics. But by not having statistics on ethnicity the countries prevent the creation of decent social welfare programs that may help the ethnic groups that struggle the most (FRA, October 2009, p. 8).

FRA (November 2009, pp. 6-8, 18-19) found in a report that the majority of Roma respondents mentioned poverty and racism as push factors for choosing to migrate to another country, as well as the pull factor of having aspirations that their lives can be improved in the new country, by better social and financial opportunities. Having family members or friends in the country they have decided to migrate to can be a huge pull factor. There seem to be a gap between the rights to migrate within the EU and what the Roma people know about this. This may be exploited by corrupt government officials. When the Roma people finally arrive to a new country, the governments' responses may vary greatly, from providing them with employment opportunities and housing to preventing them from settling. Unfortunately the latter seem to be the norm. There are many challenges connected to finding employment in the host-countries, and if this is not achieved, then housing becomes challenging as well, which again can lead to further discrimination. Another challenge is connected to registration when arriving to a new country. This appears to be a challenge for many Roma. If they are unable to register then their chances of finding employment, housing, gaining health benefits

and education are further reduced. Much of the debate in Norway the last year has been concentrated around Roma beggars. Many find it easy to connect Roma beggars with petty crime, and fail to recognize the often present link between long-term discrimination, challenges with finding formal employment and the decision to beg. And that this in fact seems to be two different groups of people. Research has not found any link between Roma beggars and Romanian criminals.

Data from Romania show that Roma which maintained their independence in the sense of travel patterns and traditions are socially and financially better off (Engebrigtsen, 2007). The majority of Roma people in Norway as well as most other countries are to a large extent dependent on economic support from the state (HL-Senteret, October 2011).

As previously mentioned there are challenges connected with identifying how many Roma there are. This is also apparent when we look at data on immigrants in Norway. There is a gap of identification when current statistics primarily focuses on division of countries, which thus fail to answer how many Roma there are in Norway. As we know, Roma come from several European countries. When their nationality is identified, some answer the country they were born in, while others may answer the country they last were in. The authorities' reluctance to identify different groups can to some extent be understood, but there are also some great disadvantages of not identifying them. These should weigh more heavily than the disadvantages identification may lead to. We know that Romania is the country with the largest Roma population (Rroma.org, n. d. d.). From 1966 to 2011 the immigration to Norway from Romania increased from three to 1227 people. The biggest change was from 2007 to 2008, when the number of immigrants from Romania to Norway almost doubled (Statistisk sentralbyrå, n. d.). This can be linked to the country's entry into the EU and Schengen agreement which happened in this time period. Some of these immigrants that were registered may be Roma. This great uncertainty of how many Roma there are in Norway is also connected to the fact that the majority of them arrive in the country through the Schengen agreement. Thus they can travel freely and can stay up to 90 days in Norway as long as they can provide for themselves. There is little to no monitoring of the people that stay here for such a period. Since the group of people staying for a 90 days period has continued to increase the last years, is it reasonable to assume that better monitoring should be implemented. Having at least some rough figures will be a good tool to assist those that arrive to the country.

2.3 Study Area and location

2.3.1 Study area: Kristiansand

This research was conducted in the city of Kristiansand, located at the South of Norway. Kristiansand is the sixth largest city in Norway with its 84 476 inhabitants and a population growth 1233 in 2012 (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 14 May 2013). Kristiansand was chosen as study area because of its response to the Roma people. On one side Kristiansand municipality has made registration mandatory for the city's beggars. On the other side Kristiansand is one of the few cities that have provided a sanitation facility to the city's 50 registered beggars (NRK, 25 April 2012).

2.3.2 Locations: Vestervei-Bridge, Markensgate and the Salvation Army

Except for a three week period in March and April 2013 when Roma in Kristiansand could sleep in apartments, they live near or under the Vestervei-Bridge close to the city center. Some people sleep in cars at the parking lot, but the majority sleep under the bridge. This is also where they prepare their meals. At this location some Roma people have placed mattresses, sleeping bags and their personal belongings.

Since August 2012 Roma have had the option of using a sanitation facility located approximately 200 meters from where they sleep. This facility is an offer for homeless people who lack access to showers and toilets. In the early spring of 2013 a container was also placed next to the facility, and in late April 2013 a construction was put up behind the facility so that the Roma population could dry their clothes. The sanitation facility consists of three rooms. One has a basic shower, the other has toilet and a sink and the third room is a maintenance room which Roma do not have access to. Roma themselves keep it tidy and clean. Five organizations have the responsibility of looking after the facility.

Roma in Kristiansand spend the majority of their days in or near Markensgate. This is the main street in Kristiansand. The Roma people seem to have rather fixed places where they sit, usually on street corners, many lean up to a lamppost. There are some people however, that sit in adjoining streets to Markensgate. I will in the analytical chapters discuss who these people are.

Another location where Roma spend some time is at the Salvation Army. In the city center they have a welfare center where Roma can go to get a meal, a bag of food and sometimes also clothes. Roma attend this with other members of the population in Kristiansand. The welfare center is open two days a week, one for both male and females, and one day for females. In addition to the sanitation facility, this is the offer that Roma use the most.

3. Literature review and theoretical approaches

This part of the thesis focuses on some of the literature available about aspects of the lives of Roma that are relevant to this thesis. This includes literature on living standards, discrimination, the effects of policies implemented and also briefly about Norway and minorities. There is a lot of literature about Roma people, however there seem to be some limitations to the availability of literature about Roma in Norway, and furthermore, on the treatment in Norway the recent years. Literature from other countries in Europe is also reviewed, as it gives a broader perspective of the situation for Roma. The topics in the literature review reflect what I found to be the most relevant in relation to the topic of this thesis.

3.1 Living standards

Within the EU and the EEA there are great economical differences. Roma are largely represented in some of the poorer countries. The majority of Roma people live in segregated neighbourhoods. And as FRA found in 2009, the majority of Roma also live in substandard housing. One interesting finding is that this segregation in housing can affect Roma's ability to get paid employment. The lack of adequate housing is often seen in coherence with segregation and discrimination from the authorities' side. The Roma people are often accommodated away from the majority of the population, near waste dumps or in polluted areas. This not only leads to poor health and decline in property value, but also to increased violence within the group being placed in one location. Reports show that in some European countries, like Hungary, Romania and France, the Roma people live in segregated areas. Whilst in other countries, such as Denmark and Sweden, they live in minority areas together with other minorities (FRA, March 2010, pp. 6-7). There are numeral examples of local protests against placement of Roma people in a society, several examples were seen in Oslo, Norway in 2012.

In a FRA survey about the Roma people, 54 per cent of the respondents answered that they live in minority areas, while 21 per cent live in majority areas (FRA, October 2009, p. 5). Many are removed from areas they live in with force. This is a violation of the human rights,

and such forced moving, together with other types of discrimination is partially responsible for the living conditions for Roma people. Political advisor in Amnesty, Gerald K. Folkvord, explains that what the majority of the Roma people want is to live the same type of life as the majority of Europe's population (Amnesty International Norway, 16 July 2012).

Some Roma are up to ten times as poor as the majority population in a country. According to the World Bank in 2000 almost 80 per cent of the Roma population in Romania and Bulgaria lived on less than 4.30 dollars a day (Wolfensohn and Soros, n. d. b.). As Wolfensohn and Soros (n. d. a.) argue, it is fundamental for the continued development of Europe that one of the biggest minorities on the continent is included in the development process and that their living standards are improved. The intra mobility between the European countries has tempted many people, Roma included to find new places to live. The financial crisis of 2008 and the recessions in the aftermath has made it even more difficult for the Roma people to find employment; who to a large extent have lower skill levels than the majority of citizens in many European countries (European Commission, 2010, p. 9). It is worrisome that only one third of working aged Roma are employed, and additionally that almost two thirds of Roma respondents in a survey stated that they had been denied jobs because of being Roma (Hyde, 31 March 2006). Many thus engage in begging to secure a livelihood.

Voiculescu (2009, cited in Engebrigtsen, 2012, p. 37) found in an interview with a mayor in a small town in Romania that the income that the Roma people generate from begging in other countries, may not only benefit the individuals and families, it may also have a trickle-down effect on the society as a whole. The Roma that have been begging will to a larger extent be able to buy services and goods, while also becoming less reliant on social welfare. Whether or not this is applicable to the situation of the Roma people today is uncertain. This research was conducted in 2009. Thus when reviewing the situation in Norway, we see that there has been an increasing flow of beggars, which can have several consequences for the level of income that each Roma is able to generate. There are several possible effects of the increasing number of beggars, one effect may be that the increasing presence of Roma in the Norwegian society may lead to reluctance to give money; another outcome is that although the overall amount of money that people give is the same, it is divided between more beggars than before.

Research conducted on beggars in Oslo found that all of the respondents used other description of their work than *begging*. This word seems to be a very negative loaded word,

which the Roma people themselves do not identify with. The Romanian word for begging is “cersitul”. Instead of identifying themselves with begging, many stated that; “we are here in the streets” and they stress that they do not force anyone to give them money. Roma people from Romania are allowed to stay in Norway for 90 days within a 180 day time period, and most people leave on the date that they are supposed to leave. However, for those that stay longer, and end up being deported there are few consequences. It is the same for people that return to Norway earlier than when they are supposed to. There is obviously a gap here, between the law and the actual implementation of the law, which understandably is easy to exploit when you are desperate and in need of money (Brattvåg, 2007, pp. 10, 19).

3.2 The discrimination

FRA found in a study that about 50 per cent of the respondents were discriminated against in the previous 12 months because of their ethnicity (European Commission, 2010a, p. 9). 90 per cent of Roma respondents living in Hungary stated that discrimination is very widespread. Unfortunately the percentage is also high in the Czech Republic with 83 per cent and Slovakia with 81 per cent. In Romania this percentage is 42 (FRA, October 2009, p. 13). The continuous discrimination and exclusion many Roma experience, is often based on old prejudice. As a result of this discrimination some Roma altered their names to be non-Roma in order to have a fair chance of finding employment (Pedersen, 1996, p. 44). Discrimination also affects children and the segregation many Roma children are faced with in schools is worrisome. To place Roma students in segregated Roma classes or in special needs classes is common in some European countries.

Since the fall of Communism in 1989, increasing racially motivated violence against Roma have occurred, especially in Central and Eastern Europe with violence peaking in the mid 1990's and then again in 2006. There is also an increasing presence and support to right-wing, minority hostile groups in some parts of the continent; and these are responsible for several of the violent and organized attacks. However, there are also many incidents where individuals have executed the attacks. This violence includes the use of weapons, Molotov cocktails, arson and beating people. In some cases this has led to death. What is perhaps most worrisome is the lack of attention this gets from the police and other authorities. Investigation

is often lacking, if ever present, and criminal persecution is rare. With this in mind, it is understandable why very few Roma go to the extent of contacting the authorities when they have become victims of crime (Council of Europe, February 2012, pp. 63-66). They do not trust *gaje*, and we are not making enough efforts to show them that they should either.

The discrimination of Roma can be statutory and very clear, like in Bosnia where Jews and Roma are prohibited from top positions in politics (NRK, 10 September 2012). Or it can be hidden and fundamental in the sense that the Roma people are deprived of their basic needs. Throughout Europe there are stories of how Roma are treated and the situation in the Eastern part of the continent can be both violent and dangerous to the Roma population. Right-wing groups in Hungary have attacked innocent Roma families, burned down houses and shot adults as well as children. In Bulgaria about 80 per cent of human trafficking victims are Roma (Council of Europe, February 2012, pp. 63-66).

A research conducted by FRA (2009, p. 3), found that 23 per cent of several thousand Roma respondents answered that they sometimes avoid places due to discrimination. The occurrence of violence is also rather high amongst the Roma population; one in 4 answered that they had experienced violence during the past 12 months, and one in 5 had experienced racially motivated violence such as assaults and harassment. The research also found that, with the exception of Romania, it is the areas where people apply for work and in private spheres that the majority of the discrimination occurs. In Hungary and the Czech Republic, 32 per cent of respondents experienced discrimination when applying for work against nine per cent in Romania. The highest incident of discrimination in the private sphere was in Poland with 48 per cent, while the lowest was reported in Bulgaria (seven per cent) (FRA, 2009, p. 5).

The discrimination against Roma is further reinforced when high profiled people such as politicians and other representatives of government lights a torch on the discrimination like Hungary's ambassador to Norway, Mr Géza Jeszenszky did. He stated that many Roma are mentally ill due to marriages between siblings or cousins (Færaas, 31 October 2012). When high profiled people such as Mr Jeszenszky make such allegations, is it unavoidable that others pick up these ideas, which in turn, will make the gap between knowledge and prejudice more difficult to bridge. In mass media, the differences between Roma and Romanians are rarely acknowledged. Both law enforcement and media refers to criminal Romanians as the same people that beg for money and sleep outside. In Norway we have an on-going debate on

whether the Roma should be considered as criminals even though there is in fact no evidence that most Roma in Norway are criminals. Of course some may be doing petty crime in addition to begging, but there is no evidence that this is the norm. The parallels drawn in the media reinforce the stigma against the Roma people. For instance articles referring to criminal Romanians are at the same time showing pictures of Roma. It is therefore not surprising that some people may see these two different groups of people as one group, and therefore maintain the prejudice against an already marginalized group of people.

Jan Otto Johansen writes in his book “Folket som ingen vil ha” (1995, p. 10) that by percentage of its population, the same amount of Roma got killed as Jews did during the Second World War. It is then noteworthy that there is so little attention given to Porajmos, the Roma people’s holocaust. Roma people continue to be discriminated against, also from mainstream society’s side. Johansen perceives that one of the possible causes for this is that Roma do not have their own country. As they do not claim a territory or have a state that helps them, persecution of Roma is not seen as something that may alter the state of the continent in any particular way. Because of the lack of attention on Roma, and other social factors that play in, there is a huge gap in the representation and protection of Roma from international organizations. In other words, one can expect that a human rights violation against a Roma will get less attention, if any, than if a Norwegian’s rights were violated. There are many incidents of human rights violations against Roma, and only a very small percentage leads to consequences for the violators. Johansen (1995, p. 215) has in his book focused on Eastern Europe’s treatment of Roma as the discrimination and treatment of Roma has been worse on this part of the continent. But countries in Western Europe should not be proud of themselves either. According to Johansen Portugal is the only country in Western Europe that does not discriminate Roma.

3.3 Policies implemented to reduce discrimination

Overarching national inclusion strategies aimed at Roma people have been implemented in several countries. These focus on already present human rights such as right to education, health services and employment. Some cross-sector measures have also been implemented in certain European countries, one example is unemployed Roma participating in building

homes for Roma families through a public works programme in Slovenia. It is crucial that inclusion programs have an extra focus on groups that are particularly vulnerable, including children, elderly, women and people with illnesses. However, there seem to be a lack of success in terms of special attention to these groups. One example of success is from Germany, where a free health check-up programme was created, and Roma are the majority users of this service. Another example is from Sweden, where Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs funds projects that address gender equality among national minorities (European Commission, 2010, pp. 17-18). Spain is in many instances seen as the bright example over many years. There has since 1978 been laws on the rights of Roma to attend school and to be integrated. The percentage of Roma living in slums has been reduced from 75 per cent in 1978 to four per cent today. The integration of Roma in Spain has tempted many to come to the country. However, the recent financial crisis in Spain has hit Roma residing in Spain very hard (Willgohs, 19 July 2012).

The Decade of Roma Inclusion lasting from 2005 to 2015 was originally designed to commit the European governments to make necessary priorities in order to improve the lives of the Roma people. Currently, 12 countries are taking part in the Decade of Roma Inclusion and the majority of these are located in the Central and Eastern parts of Europe. The World Bank, the UNDP, the Council of Europe, UNHCR as well as WHO work together with the governments to reduce the exclusion of this group of people (Decade of Roma Inclusion, n. d.). Countries in the European Union have funded projects that are aimed to improve the lives of Roma people. The pitfall is that the results of these projects is lacking due to the membership countries' inability to act on the issue. Initiating projects and creating organizations are all well and good. However, noticeable results are necessary. To see results that indicate that the Roma people's lives are improved will of course take time, but some improvements should have been visible at this stage. As the Decade of Roma Inclusion started in 2005, a substantial amount of money should therefore be, and is expected to have been put into improving the socio-economic status for this group, so where are the results? What is interesting is that no one knows exactly the extent of the funding. With that said; the EU social fund has put aside 100 billion Norwegian kroner for vulnerable groups. Given that Roma people is one of the largest minority group in the region, if not the largest, it is to be expected that a substantial amount of money should be spent on improving their lives (Europabevegelsen, 30 August 2010).

A FRA report states that there is little evidence of policies and measures which are implemented to better integrate Roma people in their new country. There also seem to be a very general identification of what Roma is. This may be caused by challenges of identification, and often includes; “Roma nationals, Roma citizens of other EU countries and Roma third-country nationals”. Depending on the policies in each country, this generalization can be good or bad (November 2009, pp. 7-8).

The European Commission is not satisfied with how the Member States have implemented the Free Movement Directive; “not one Member State has transposed the Directive effectively and correctly in its entirety. Not one Article of the Directive has been transposed effectively and correctly by all Member States” (FRA, November 2009, p. 13). Despite that there is no actual data on the number of EU citizens that use this right based by ethnicity; research shows that the group of people that are most often excluded when migrating to other Member States are Roma. The lack of data may inhibit the creation of suitable policies. However, it also highlights the need for such policies (FRA, November 2009, p. 14).

When Roma are experiencing discrimination or violence, 86 per cent answer that they are not aware of any organizations that can help them. This shows that these organizations and the authorities need to raise awareness of organizations and policies that are created to aid Roma. The authorities should also raise awareness about discrimination of Roma in order to reduce it. They should also implement efforts to enlighten Roma of where to report discriminatory experiences. Furthermore, those that are aware of agencies they can report to, often choose not to. The same research found that 78 per cent of the respondents answered that they choose not to report because they did not think anything would happen, and 52 per cent answered that they were not aware of where they can report such incidents (FRA, 2009, pp. 3, 6).

To reduce the discrimination against Roma and increase their well-being demands policies to reduce the gaps in living standards. Johansen (1995, pp. 138-140) refer to the town of Dunavitsj in Bulgaria where the living standards for the Roma population are comparable to the standards of their Bulgarian neighbours. Not only are the housing opportunities comparable, but also sanitation and social services are the same. Roma have traditionally married at an early age, commonly around the age of 16. This has meant that Roma seldom have gained secondary education, due to their homely responsibilities. When this is the norm, and there is a lack of role models it is less likely that they will obtain further education. In

Dunavitsj, Roma and Bulgarians attend the same classes, and more over, 70 per cent of the Roma finish secondary education. It is pointed out that not only is there equality in the school accessibility, but also social aspects that influence the high graduation rate. This shows that, implementation of certain policies that aim to not only give better standards and opportunities for the Roma, but also to provide them with the same educational standard that the rest of the population receives has great advantages, and that it in fact is possible. It is proven again and again that adequate living standards are crucial for the level of education one gets. When the first is in place, it is easier to follow up with education, which will reduce levels of illiteracy and unemployment. It is important to create initiatives that assist Roma while they get the necessary education that in turn will increase their chances of finding employment they can live off.

3.4 Norway and minorities

The Norwegian government recognizes Jews, Forest Finns, Kvens, Roma and Romani people as national minority groups (Fornyings-, Administrasjons- og Kirkedepartementet, n. d. b.). It is therefore very interesting that the rights of the Roma minority are not respected. It is politics and special rights for minority groups that often make governments hesitant to recognizing a group as a minority. Bjørn Olav Megård, a government representative states that since the Roma people only live temporarily in Norway under the EEA agreement, they are not recognized as a minority group. By not recognizing them as a minority group, Professor Joron Pihl states that the Norwegian government is not acting within the Council of Europe's Minority Convention. The aim with this convention is to protect minority groups from discrimination. There is an important distinction between minority groups and being an EEA citizen, and by perceiving Roma people as EEA citizens, the state is not obliged to provide the people with employment and housing, neither do they have special rights with regards to protecting their culture and language (Journalen, 10 September 2012).

The Norwegian Sami population is regarded as an indigenous group, and are therefore protected under the ILO Convention 169. The Action Plan consists of several measures to increase the inclusion of minorities into the Norwegian society by entitlements to welfare and other services. The Advisory Committee states in its report that new policies aimed at the inclusion of Roma people have been implemented, especially in the fields of housing,

education and employment. However, especially with regards to accommodation the Roma people are still discriminated against (Council of Europe, June 2011). This was also evident during the summer of 2012 when Roma people were forced to leave where they had found shelter several times before. However, the initiatives mentioned above, are targeted especially at Roma people that are registered as a part of the Norwegian society, whether them being of Norwegian or foreign nationality. Roma people that come to Norway to beg are commonly not registered. It is worrisome that only two Norwegian Roma students have finished high school since the creation of the Rehabilitation program in the late 1970s (HL-Senteret, October 2011). This raises attention to the effect of such programs and the importance of bringing cultural awareness into such programs.

The history of the Norwegian minority policy is gloomy. National minorities have had to be assimilated, in other words adopted into to the Norwegian society. They were not allowed to speak their language, and in many cases, families were separated. Some women were forcefully sterilized in order to limit the growth of the minorities (Fornyings-, Administrasjons- og Kirkedepartementet, n. d. a.). In the early 1960's, the Parliament Paper no. 21 finally changed the Sami policy (Arbeidsdepartementet, 2001). One would think that this history would make people more aware of their attitudes towards minority groups, but it seems like history easily is forgotten.

Research conducted by the Centre for Studies of Holocaust and Religious Minorities (HL-Senteret, May 2012) on the Norwegian population's attitude towards minorities between 2010 and 2012 found that residents in Oslo, and other large cities, are more hostile to Roma people than people from smaller towns. Highly educated people seemed to be more positive towards Roma. However, people with high income were more negative towards the Roma people than those with lower income. There is also a distinction between liberal and conservative people. Those that vote on parties in the left in politics are usually less negative towards Roma people and other minorities. However, 37 per cent of the people said they would strongly dislike a Roma marrying a family member. 56 per cent answered that there are great benefits from immigration; however they are divided when it comes to the financial aspects of immigration. Education level seems to be of great importance in this aspect. 46 per cent of the respondents with only elementary education answered that immigration contributes to greater cultural diversity in Norway compared to 74 per cent of respondents with more than four years of higher education. Gender and age may also have an impact on discrimination as women over

45 seem to be more positive than young men. The statistics listed above are great examples that enforce the perception that Roma are discriminated against, also in Norway.

Having said this, EEA grants and Norwegian grants (Norway grants), have provided European countries with a substantial amount of money that is supposed to improve the status of Roma in several ways. Projects in different countries are supported since Roma people are located in several countries in Europe. 30 million Euro was handed out to a NGO fund in Romania which recognizes the needs of minority groups, especially the Roma people (EEA grants- Norway grants, n. d.). Norway has implemented an Action Plan for Equality and Prevention of Ethnic Discrimination in addition to a project that is aimed to promote inclusion of Roma people in the society (Regjeringen.no, 2009).

In 2012 the number of immigrants and Norwegian-born to immigrant parents had the highest increase ever with 55 300 people. 593 300 immigrants are currently living in Norway, originating from 220 different countries. The Poles are the largest immigrant group in Norway, then follows Swedes, Germans, Lithuanians and Somalis (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 25 April 2013a). 6322 people from Romania resided in Norway in 2012. The representation between men and women is almost equal according to the statistics (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 25 April 2013b).

In Kristiansand there are approximately between 45-50 Roma people depending on season. There is little evidence of any integration, however, many people do work for an inclusion of, or at least provision of services to, Roma in Kristiansand. Almost three out of 4 immigrants in Kristiansand are refugees, primarily from Vietnam and Chile. These immigrants have been in the country for a long time (Aalandslid and Østby, 20 September 2007). The length of a person's stay plays a part in how well integrated a person becomes. It speaks for itself that, the longer you are in a country, likelihood of learning the language and cultural codes increases. Since the majority of Roma only stay in Norway and Kristiansand for short periods it is not easy for them to understand cultural codes which may make their stay in Norway more pleasant, even if they only are here for a short time.

3.5 Theoretical approaches

So far, the literature review enforces the view that several types of discrimination practices affect the Roma people's ability to develop. This shows in inadequate living standards, poverty, low education and low employment rates, which are the reality of many Roma. On this background I will now turn to a brief discussion of some theories that have been relevant for discussions in this thesis. These include what is called the "new" poverty, the links between discrimination, exclusion and poverty and also the links between migration, development and poverty, which also includes push and pull factors.

3.5.1 The new poverty

Poverty is today perceived differently than before, and it has become apparent that even though living in a high-income country, some groups of the population can still be very poor. This new poverty is seen as an effect of exclusion from the general improvements that many countries have experienced, and thus such exclusion can set people back if their lives are not improved at the same pace as the rest of the population. Much literature argue that generally throughout Europe the average education level of Roma people is lower than the median of the population. 600 000 Roma children attend primary school in Europe, however very few complete this level and a staggering one per cent of Roma that live in Central and Eastern Europe get higher education. This means that there is a massive gap between the educational level of Roma and the rest of the region (Wolfensohn and Soros, n. d. a.). This is bound to affect their future in several ways. A survey found that out of the young Roma people that were interviewed, only 15 per cent answered that they have completed secondary education, compared to 70 per cent of the rest of the population in that area (UNDP, 24 May 2012). This can not only inhibit them from finding employment, it can also prevent them from finding satisfactory housing.

According to the FRA survey the Roma people are highly represented as living under material deprivation in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic (Figure 16: FRA, October 2009, pp. 25-26). This material deprivation is seen in the lack of affording at least four of the following items: paying for utilities or rent, heating, paying for unexpected

expenses, to eat some sort of protein every second day, have a car, a television, a telephone, a washing machine and to have the ability to go on a one-week holiday each year. Severe material deprivation is in some sense a newer form of poverty.

There are unfortunately little data on the living standards of Roma in Norway. On a more general basis figures do show that immigrants and refugees are more likely to be living below the relative poverty line than Norwegians (Bhuller and Aaberge, 2010, p. 6). According to a Statistics Norway survey, there will be close to zero people living below the absolute poverty line (Bhuller and Aaberge, 2010, p. 8). According to OECD's measuring tools used in the data collection by Statistics Norway between 12 and 19 per cent of immigrants were considered poor in the period 1993-2007, compared to between two and three per cent of the rest of the population (Bhuller and Aaberge, 2010). Even though there is little knowledge on the standards of living for the Roma people that are in Norway to beg, based on the little information we do have, it is fair to say that many of these people are close to the absolute poverty line.

3.5.2 Links between discrimination, exclusion and poverty

If people experience discrimination over time this often, willingly or unwillingly leads to exclusion and marginalization. Exclusion from society may again lead to a state of poverty. Marginalized groups such as Roma are often at risk of poverty, and an example of this is seen in an FRA research where eight out of 10 of the Roma respondents are at risk of poverty. Being at risk for poverty means that that person's equalized income is under 60 per cent of the national median equalized income (FRA, October 2009, p. 25). Poverty is often understood with reference to income poverty, but it can often also include poor quality of basic needs or the lack of these. Poverty can also include the level of access to education, satisfactory health services, housing opportunities and employment. These aspects often go hand in hand as it for instance is challenging to obtain a good health if you do not have proper housing. In addition education leads to more knowledge about important measures to stay healthy. Lack of any of these factors above can lead to poverty and the aspect of low living standards is important when looking at the lives of the Roma people.

The majority of the Roma population are young people who are able to work. However they experience that their lack of education, means that they are "unfit" for certain types of jobs

and find it difficult to become part of a working force. Being excluded from the labour market is of course contributing to a continued exclusion from society forcing Roma to find other means of income-generation which again may reinforce discrimination. On the part of the Roma people this is of course a major loss. In addition, European countries also lose hundreds of million euros every year, both in fiscal contributions to the governments and in productivity, by not including young and able people in the labour market. As an example, 887 million euros in productivity losses are estimated to be lost each year in Romania because of this exclusion. Being included of course demands higher levels of education. Roma in Romania who complete secondary education are expected to earn 114 per cent more than compared to those with only primary education (the World Bank, 2010). Thus if Roma receive more education and actually stay in school, the economic benefits are potentially great.

3.5.3 Migration, development and poverty - the importance of push and pull factors

An United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) report found that it is not the poorest people, or people from the poorest areas that usually migrate as there are severe costs related to migration. Both men and women migrate; men for labour and women to a larger extent because of cultural changes and social infrastructure. However, this does not imply that the poorest do not migrate; it implies that they are more prone to migrate in dangerous and unregulated ways (de Haan and Yaqub, 2009, pp. 5- 6). Thus migrating when you are really poor often leaves you even worse off than before as you may have to put yourself in debt to be able to migrate. This debt delays the potential positive effects from the migration. That so many Roma people choose to leave their homes and family in order to beg in another country must be seen as an attempt to escape hardship. The historical-structuralist paradigm sees that this is caused by a global capitalist expansion. This theory sees migration as something that enhances the challenges which on a general basis actually make people migrate and thus enforces underdevelopment (de Haas, 2010).

The UNRISD report also accounts for that people tend to migrate to areas where someone they know already has migrated to. Migration patterns are also impacted by social divide, one side of it can be seen in Norway, where the majority of Roma people beg for money instead of applying for traditional employment. A possibility for remitting money to the families back

home are also an incentive to migrate in order to ensure some sort of income. However, there are great variations as to how much one is able to remit. Staying in a wealthy country such as Norway is expensive. Despite that the majority of the Roma people live outside when they are in Norway, food is expensive, and the generated income as a beggar varies greatly. Social policies can also in many instances reduce possibilities for migrants and be used as a tool for social exclusion as well as discrimination against migrators. Exclusion practices deprive people from important opportunities with regards to education in particular (de Haan and Yaqub, 2009). This is especially critical when children are involved. Still, we see that people migrate and many do so in search of a better life.

Lee's theory of migration explains that there are four main factors that impact migration choices. These four factors are related to the place of origin, the destination, personal matters and "intervening obstacles". Intervening obstacles refers to costs related to crossing borders (Lee, 1966, pp. 49-50). Lee also speaks of the characteristics of migration, one of the points is that migration is selective, which refers to people reacting differently to the push and pull factors, especially related to the place of origin. Push factors are factors which push you to leave the society you live in, while pull factors are the factors that pull you towards a particular society. Push and pull factors are both divided into economic, social and political factors.

As will be discussed later in this thesis, we can see several push and pull factors in place for the Roma population that choose to come to Kristiansand. Lee in his migration theory differentiates between migrants that are influenced by positive factors and those that are affected by negative factors. The first are people which often have a high level of education, or are otherwise comfortable with their lives. They have however after consideration decided to migrate because they believe in an even better life in this other place. People that are affected by negative factors may often not have a choice of whether or not migrate. These people are facing economic and/ or social challenges in their place of origin and are often people who are uneducated or facing other challenges according to Lee (1966, p. 56).

Although seemingly questioning the push and pull model, de Haas (2008, p. 9) explains it as an "individual choice and equilibrium model, and is, therefore largely analogous to neo-classical micro models". de Haas argues that this model fails to recognize that migration is a social process, meaning that people also choose to migrate because they believe they will be

able to “make a more satisfying living” in this other places (2008, p. 10). One argument against de Haas’ statement is that when people are influenced by pull factors which they believe may change their lives, this is often a result of a hope that their lives will improve. That is for instance why many people migrate because of a belief in job opportunities. We can anticipate that the Roma people who decide to come to Norway do so with the hope of more income and possibly also with a wish for potentially freedom from mistreatment.

The migration systems theory have the similar perceptions on migration flows as Lee’s migration theory; that migration flows of remittances and information often are structured in a geographical way and that ethnic sub groups “specialize” in migrating to other countries or cities. The migration systems theory is concerned with the factors that lead to migration (de Haas, 2008, pp. 22-23). In the empirical chapters these issues are further discussed. Before I turn to my empirical findings I will however, in the following chapter discuss my methodology.

4. Methodology

This chapter presents the methodological approach. I discuss research strategy and design, data collection and sampling techniques. I also discuss reliability and validity and reflect on limitations and ethical considerations during my fieldwork. This chapter also contextualises the Roma informants and give a description of how I got into and worked in the field. The data collection for this thesis started in November 2012. The first months were spent on reviewing literature and planning for fieldwork. The actual fieldwork, with interviews and observation lasted about four months, and was conducted during the first four months of 2013.

4.1 Research strategy

Choosing a research strategy is never easy as there are many ways to investigate a certain problem. A research strategy often reflects the general directions of how the research is conducted (Bryman, 2008, p. 698). The research strategy applied in this thesis is entirely a qualitative approach. Even though I have been consulting statistical reports my data collection or my empirical findings stem from qualitative research. Bryman (2008, p. 366) explains the qualitative research's epistemological position as interpretive. This means that its focus is to understand the social aspect of the world through examining and interpreting the world as seen by its participants. As explained above, the aim with this research is to understand more about Roma's lives, especially their own perception of it. In order to explore this, a qualitative research strategy was seen as the most appropriate approach. In addition to being interpretive, qualitative research is inductive. This means that there is a main focus on empirical data and that theory is generated from the data. This type of research also reflects an ontological position which is constructionist. Bryman (2008, p. 366) explains that in constructionism "social properties are outcomes of the interactions between individuals".

4.2 Research design

I have chosen a case study design. This can be explained as focusing on "the complexity and particular nature of a case in question" (Stak, 1995, cited in Bryman, 2008, p. 52). This way

of interpreting the case study design explains very well why the most suitable research design for this research was considered to be the case study design. A case study is often associated with a location or an organization, which in my case is appropriate since this research will be conducted in Kristiansand, Norway, focusing on a specific group; the Roma people. Case study design is also used when research is done on a single community, which in a loose term might be used about the Roma people, as they in most meanings of the word, have created their own community within the city of Kristiansand (Bryman, 2008, pp. 52-53).

4.3 Data collection

The main data collection for this fieldwork is based on individual interviews. In addition a group interview was conducted and I also gathered data through observation. Searching through the literature and other documents were other methods for gathering more general information. The document review increased my knowledge about the living standards of the Roma people. Moreover, I learnt more about what kind of policies that have been implemented to improve the lives of the Roma people in general and in Kristiansand specifically.

4.3.1 Individual interview

The main focus in this research was on Roma people that beg in Kristiansand. Other people interviewed were those who work with the Roma people and these includes people working with Christian organizations, churches, a politician and some private people. I have called this group of informants the support system. The people that were interviewed differ in gender, age, civil status, level of education and social status. The individual interviews were conducted at several locations; in the streets, at the library, at the University and in offices. The locations depended on what the informants were comfortable with and what was considered appropriate for each setting. When employees in organizations were interviewed, the interview often took place in an office. Due to time constraints and the busy schedule of some of the informants, a few interviews were conducted over the telephone or via e-mail. The first interview that I conducted was with Kari Klingsheim from the Salvation Army. Interviewing her had a snowball effect in the sense that it lead to the interviewing of others

and also gave me access to the welfare center which Roma amongst others have access to and use.

It is roughly estimated that 45-50 Roma people are located in Kristiansand (NRK, 25 April 2012), and with this in mind, the sample size was decided to be between 20-30 people. The Roma population in Kristiansand differ throughout the year, yet most of the time is it less than 50 people. The 24 people that in the end were interviewed was related to how many Roma that were in Kristiansand at that time. People interviewed are sometimes talked about as respondents, however in this study I refer to those interviewed as informants. The different terms are often used reflecting different interpretations (Ryen, 2002, p. 17). A respondent is somehow perceived as more passive than an informant. For the benefit of my research the people interviewed for this study are perceived as informants. Whether it is the Roma people, or an employee in a Christian organization, the informant is valued for the insights that person has on the topic of discrimination of Roma people.

Due to social stigma the theme discrimination can for some people be a complicated issue to discuss, and I was aware of this when entering the field. It turned out however not be as difficult to talk about as anticipated. I was also aware of the fact that both the interpreter and me being female, could lead to challenges when interviewing men. However I did not perceive this to have a particular impact on the informants' responses. The fact that my interpreter was Romanian was also considered before entering the field and I will return to this issue below. Due to confidentiality and the well-being of the Roma informants, I have changed their names. I have also done the same with other informants if they requested this.

Interviews were chosen as the primary method for data collection, mainly because they are so flexible, but also because language constraints made it difficult to base my data collection on participant observation. I have, however, spent time with and observed Roma people at the Salvation Army and also outside. Bryman (2008, pp. 436-437) distinguishes between the unstructured interview and the semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interview was chosen because it was considered useful to have an interview guide. As mentioned above, the qualitative interview is often used when the aim is to finding out what the informant's point of view is. It facilitates for a discussion and it is not uncommon to depart from the interview guide when talking to people during an interview. I often ended up following the informant during the interviews instead of trying to get the informant to follow me. It was therefore

important that there was room for shifting back and forth from this guide based on what was most appropriate for each interview. I decided to use an interview guide since this would contribute to making sure that all the important aspects were covered in the interviews. In a qualitative interview there is an opportunity to give detailed responses to the issues raised and there is also an opportunity to re-interview and return to things not understood or not sufficiently covered. These are some of the causes as to why I chose to conduct a qualitative research based on interviews.

There seem to be mixed experiences with the use of a recorder in qualitative research. Although Bryman (2008, p. 451) raise some valid arguments as to why one should use a recording device, I came to a different conclusion for my research. In this research I interviewed a group of people which in many instances have less than good experiences with authorities. I feared that if I used a recording device, they would be reluctant to be interviewed on my questions about discrimination. I carefully noted down what came out of the interview. During the interview period I also realized that as most of my interviews were conducted outside, following the informants' wishes, transcribing recorded data would probably have been difficult due to surrounding noise. Bryman argues that it may be challenging to keep the interview semi-structured if you are not using a recorder, however, I did not perceive this to be a problem. With these considerations in mind, in addition to the factor that I used a translator who translated each answer, I feel confident with my decision.

4.3.2 Contextualizing the informants: the Roma people in Kristiansand

The group of Roma that were interviewed is in the age group of 18-65 years old. The mean age of the female informants is 35 years while it for the male informants is 32 years. Whilst the median age for women is 28 years and for men is it 27 years. I mention this because research has shown that the majority of the Roma population in Europe is young. The results from my field-work regarding age is therefore comparable to the rest of the Roma population (Fundacion Secretariado Gitano Health Area, 2009, p. 18). There is a slight overrepresentation of men in this research group; 14 male against 10 females. This is representative for the group per March 2013. I also found that the majority of the informants have children, most commonly two. 11 informants have two children out of the 21 informants with children. Besides two people being widowed and one divorced, every informant with children shared that they are married. It should be noted that this most often is a traditional

Roma marriage, not a legal binding marriage. The overall education level was low for the Roma informants I interviewed. Out of the 11 people that replied, seven years of education was the highest level (one person). However, the most common answer was no education. In chapter 5 I reflect on what has impacted this level of education and furthermore, what influence this has on the lives of Roma.

4.3.3 Observation

Roma are a marginalized group of people. When I conducted this cross-cultural research I realized the importance of gaining some knowledge about their culture. To fully understand their way of life and how the population in Kristiansand treat them I spent some time observing them at several locations. As Roma in Kristiansand live very different lives than the general population, observation was seen as a good tool to gain more knowledge about them, and to potentially form a connection with them. This observation gave me the opportunity to learn more about the social settings Roma were in. Due to time constraints I did not learn the Romani language. However, through this observation, I was able to learn more about Roma's behaviour and social context. Behaviour that might have been ignored if interviews were the sole method of data collection. Other benefits include getting to know the people which may have made some of them more accessible to speaking freely. The Roma people have in many ways their own little society, within the Norwegian society. It should therefore not be taken for granted that what is perceived as Norwegian cultural behaviour will be applicable to the Roma's behaviour (Bryman, 2008, pp. 465-466).

4.3.4 Group Interview

A group interview is an interview with more than one interviewee and most commonly at least four (Bryman, 2008, p. 473). For the purpose of this research five Roma women took part in a group interview. All these women were first interviewed individually. I found that the informants were very talkative and eager to share and discuss while being interviewed in a group. A group interview and a focus group are quite similar; however there is particularly one difference that will explain why I chose to conduct a group interview instead of having a focus group. A group interview is not as set in one specific theme, whereas a focus group session often focuses on one topic (Bryman, 2008, p. 473). Bryman states that sometimes a group interview is conducted in order to save time and money, however, this was not the case

here. This group interview session provided me with a chance to follow up on issues and also to get access to new material that I had not been informed about before. It was relevant for the thesis, as I wanted to see how these informants communicated with each other and responded to other's feedback in addition to their individual responses.

4.3.5 Document review

Secondary literature on the discrimination of Roma people was used in the work of this thesis. It was crucial to be critical when reviewing these documents, as there might be an issue with reliability and relevance. As expected, finding reliable data for this research was challenging. Kari Klingsheim from the Salvation Army and Kolbjørn Gunnarson from the City Mission recommended a couple of reports written by employees in their organizations. And Father Christofóros Schuff from the Greek Orthodox Church recommended other literature that was valuable to this study. Bryman (2008, pp. 521-522) speaks of the value of the document review, whether this is based on research conducted by the organizations themselves or by others. As the study was conducted in Norway, literature on Roma people in Norway was particularly relevant. While more focus has been put on this people recently, most available information about the situation in Norway was from newspaper articles.

4.4 Sampling techniques

Bryman (2008, p. 458) recommends that purposive sampling should be conducted when doing qualitative research. This type of sampling is strategic, and as one understands from its name; purposive. Informants are chosen because of their relevance to what the researcher wishes to find out. There are two different types of purposive sampling, the snowball sampling and theoretical sampling. The first is used when there is no set sampling frame; the latter is used until the research categories reach theoretical saturation.

Snowball sampling was the sampling technique that was applied in this research. The snowball effect was applied both on the organizational level, where employees appointed me to other organizations that were interesting for this research, and to groups of people that were relevant. When it comes to the Roma people it is important to highlight that Roma in Kristiansand are a rather small group of people. When the fieldwork ended, every member of the Roma population present in the city at that particular time had been interviewed. Bryman

(2008, p. 185) highlights some negative aspects regarding snowball sampling. One of them being that it is not very representative. My opinion is that the argument about research being representative is not such an important issue as I was interested in the views of the Roma who was here at the time when I conducted my research and also the people engaged in working towards them while they were here.

4.5 Entry to the field

When planning for my research on Roma I contacted a person that has great knowledge and a connection to the Roma society in Kristiansand. This person was going to help me get in to the field and also translate the interviews. Well into the process leading to the fieldwork, due to different circumstances, this person was no longer available and I had to find another way into the Roma society and a new interpreter. Finding another way to get in touch with Roma informants was of course a challenge as I came as an outsider. Therefore, before I started the individual interviews of Roma, I conducted an interview with Kari Klingsheim from the Salvation Army who has been working with Roma people in Kristiansand. Through this I was able to come to the Salvation Army's welfare center to see if that could be a way into interviewing Roma.

When this part of the fieldwork started, there were not that many Roma in Kristiansand. I was therefore lucky to come in contact with a female student from Romania who agreed to be my interpreter. The interpreter and I went to the main street; Markensgate to find someone that I could interview. We approached a Roma beggar sitting in the main street. After talking a bit to him he agreed to be interviewed and after that interview was conducted it snowballed into several more interviews. I started the interview process by interviewing all of the Roma beggars that were in Kristiansand at that time. Eventually more Roma came to Kristiansand, and when the fieldwork ended I had interviewed 24 Roma informants. I did not want to keep the informants away from their work for too long, so I attempted to conduct the interviews within a time frame of 30 minutes. However, some people had more to say, and on several occasions we also had pleasant conversations after the interview was conducted.

4.6 Limitations

Language was the biggest limitation I faced during my fieldwork. I speak neither Romani nor Romanian, which are the languages that the majority of Roma in Kristiansand speak. I therefore needed an interpreter that spoke at least one of those languages. Another limitation was that despite that this research was conducted in my home country and the city that I live in, the Roma are in many ways a segregated group within Norway, and also Kristiansand. It was also important for me to be aware of the possible challenges with cultural differences and that some might be hesitant with regards to being interviewed. I therefore attempted to reassure the informants that the aim with the interviews- and finally this thesis was to understand more about the treatment they are faced with, and that they were anonymous informants. Cultural awareness was important, I was therefore aware of the challenge related to me being a *gaje*, meaning, non-Roma. There was the potential that some Roma were reluctant to speak to a *gaje*, especially a *gaje* that appears to profess good intentions. This is as previously stated due to the traditional belief that *gaje* are polluted and that this may reduce the effects of their rituals (Weyrauch and Bell, 1993, pp. 24-25). Even though conducting my research at home it was still a research crossing cultures, and language and cultural understanding were the two biggest challenges I faced in this cross-cultural study.

Another limitation was regarding the timeframe of the research. It would of course have been ideal to spend more months in the field to see seasonal variation for example. I was also aware of the fact that the majority of the people are poor, and that taking them away from the streets would lead to an expectation to get something in return for the time they were away from the streets. I did compensate a loss of income sometimes, and spending time with them also resulted in me putting coins in their cups from time to time. It also turned out that some aspects of the fieldwork was more challenging than what was expected. I therefore had to change some of my initial plans. As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, I was faced with the challenge of having to find a new contact person and interpreter. This was of course a great challenge but I was lucky enough to find a new interpreter. It also turned out not to be as challenging to find Roma informants that wanted to be interviewed as I originally had feared. Initially a challenge was rather that there was a lack of informants to interview. My interpreter was also very busy, and it was sometimes a challenge to find a time for conducting interviews that worked for both of us. It is of course fully understandable that she was busy, but this was

still a challenge. With that said, I feel that everyone did their best so that the interviews could be conducted, and at the end I had, with the help of my interpreter, interviewed a sufficient number of people.

Beyond having to coordinate meetings with my interpreter, one important challenge related to the use of an interpreter is the aspect of things getting lost in translation. Information is always decoded and understood by the interpreter before he or she translates it to the researcher (Bryman, 2008). The interpreter used in this research was as stated Romanian, not Roma, and it is possible that there are some limitations here related to cultural awareness. There is also the challenge that what was shared from the perspective of a Roma was told to a Romanian who again translated this to me, a Norwegian. We may also all have different cultural understandings that impact the way we see things. Thus, not only language problems are seen here but also the difficulty of translating culture has to be acknowledged. There was also a possibility that the Roma informants would have been hesitant to talk about potential discrimination when the translator was Romanian. There is a cultural aspect here that might lead them to not want to share bad experiences since this is a person that comes from the same country as them, but at the same time not being Roma. It is not easy to overcome these factors, yet having cultural awareness and the understanding that these challenges are there is important.

4.7 Reliability and validity

There are certain aspects about research that are important to have in mind. Reliability and validity are tools for establishing the “quality of research” (Bryman, 2008, p. 376). LeCompte and Goetz (cited in Bryman, 2008, p. 376) separate between external and internal reliability. External reliability refers to what degree the research can be repeated or replicated. As recognized by LeCompte and Goetz as well as Bryman (2008, p. 376) this is a challenging criterion as social settings are constantly changing. As previously mentioned in this chapter, the Roma population in Kristiansand is sporadic, and social settings and efforts may have changed as well. Another important factor is that interaction in the field, data collection and interpretations of findings will differ with the researcher doing the study. Thus a study like the one I have conducted could not be repeated with the same results. Having said that I do believe that there are trends that would come through even if a different group of Roma where

interviewed by another researcher. Internal reliability refers to the correspondence between research questions, methodology and interpretations and presentation of findings. Another important point is that the findings can be supported by other research in the field.

LeCompte and Goetz (cited in Bryman, 2008, pp. 376-377) say that internal validity is also seen as the match between the theoretical ideas the researchers develop and their observations. This is one of the strengths of qualitative research. External validity refers to whether or not the results can be generalized in other social settings. Despite this, the challenge to external validity comes when qualitative researchers employ small samples in their studies. There are often some challenges associated with transferability in qualitative research due to the study of a small group (Bryman, 2008, p. 378). Although the sample is small in this research it is my perception that it will be comparable to similar social settings in other cities or countries.

4.8 Ethical considerations

Kvale (1996, p. 110) and Alver and Øyen (1998) (cited in Ryen, 2002, pp. 207-208) explain that ethics are not only limited to the actual fieldwork, but ethical issues are valid in all aspects of the research. As Ryen (2002, pp. 207-208) explains, consent, confidentiality and trust are important aspects throughout the research process. This is very much the case for this research in particular. It was important to assure the informants of my intentions and that I was a student. It was only when that was established, that they could give full consent. Even so they may still not have completely trusted me and I took this into consideration.

During the fieldwork, I came across several ethical concerns, especially regarding obtaining interviews. Whether or not to give some sort of compensation to informants is a dilemma for most researchers, and so was it for me. The Roma people are to a large extent excluded from the large Norwegian society, and the majority of them live in poverty. With this in mind, I decided to put some money in their cups after the interviews were conducted. I came to this conclusion after reading different articles on this issue, talking to my supervisor, and with the realization that the informants would be removed from their work while they were being interviewed and thus lose potential income. I therefore decided to give a just amount of money to make up for lost income due to me interviewing them.

One of the last ethical challenges I faced dealt with some of the information I received from the Roma informants. Like I will discuss in the analysis chapters, I found that there is a hierarchical structure within the Roma population in Kristiansand. I gained information about individuals that I had to pretend that I did not know of. When I was made aware of this “power” that especially the one person had, it was very challenging to pretend to be unaware of this.

4.9 Analysis and discussion of findings

My data were analyzed using an approach based on categorization of themes to be discussed. I sorted my data based on my research questions and in the next part of the thesis my findings and discussions will be presented. The three following chapters are based on the three research questions underpinning this research;

- 1) How do the Roma people in Kristiansand perceive their everyday lives with particular reference to the challenges they are faced with given their history of exclusion and discrimination?
- 2) How do actors comprising the support system towards the Roma community in Kristiansand perceive Roma’s situation and what efforts are put in place to help Roma improve their standard of living and quality of life while here?
- 3) How can knowledge of the above shed light on strategies to work towards Roma people to prevent social exclusion and discrimination in Kristiansand and beyond?

These three research questions have underpinned the search for literature and theoretical approaches, my choice of research strategy and methodology. The findings from this study have been analyzed up against what was discussed in Chapter 3 the general literature on living standards and discrimination and approaches concerned with; the new poverty, the links between discrimination, exclusion and poverty and finally the links between migration, development and poverty including a focus on push and pull factors.

5. The Roma's view upon living in Kristiansand

This first empirical chapter looks at the findings from conducting interviews with Roma informants. In this chapter I am concerned with the Roma people of Kristiansand and I wanted to find out how Roma people perceive their situation and whether or not they feel discriminated against, and if so, what kind of discrimination this entails.

Following is a discussion of findings that are related to the first research question. These findings concern issues like income generation, living standards, challenges, possible discrimination towards Roma and aspirations for the future among Roma people living in Kristiansand. It also entails a discussion about internal hierarchy in the Roma society in Kristiansand.

5.1 Generated income, living standards and everyday challenges

In the theoretical approaches I raised the discussion about the new poverty debate and I suggested that the Roma people fit this new poverty thinking. Poverty is divided into the two sub-categories (1) absolute poverty which is when people have to live on less than 1 USD a day and (2) relative poverty which is when someone has a lower economic status compared to the rest of the population in a country (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), n. d.). The Roma population has to a large extent not benefited from the improvements their home country has seen (Amnesty International Norway, 3 April 2013 and CIA World Factbook, 7 May 2013). My findings show that they are not benefiting in Norway either. The Roma people focused on in this research would be considered relative poor both in Romania and in Norway. Many of them would be categorized as being among the poorest of the poor in Norway.

What I found about the Roma people's income is a classic example of this new poverty. There is variation in how much money people are able to generate in a day. However, the informants reply that it varies from 50 to 150 Norwegian kroner. On average is it up to 100 kroner, but there are great variations here, both individual and seasonal, and the most frequent reply was that they earn up to about 80 kroner per day. With this income, the informants are supposed to provide for themselves while they are here and their spouses, children, parents and

sometimes other family members back home. The fact that many of the informants are here with their spouses has a positive impact on their common income. Still, the level of generated income clearly places them in the category of the poor in Norway. Whether a person earns 50 kroner in a day, or 150 kroner, this is far below what an average Norwegian needs to make ends meet.

Knowing about the educational level of the Roma in Kristiansand which was discussed in the methodology chapter when my informants were contextualized it is evident that most of them are experiencing a lack of job opportunities and thus a good indication of the challenges that Roma are faced with. Lack of higher education is a challenge that only amplifies the already present difficulties, as it excludes them from finding income-generating activities beyond begging. The Roma that sit and beg, sit in the streets from about nine o'clock in the morning to early evening, regardless of season. Many would argue that this is not a job, and of course it cannot be considered a traditional job, but for the Roma people it is regarded an occupation or income generating activity when people spend the majority of their day begging in the streets to earn some money.

Some Roma, and in particular women, engage in the selling of flowers as an additional income generating activity. These women sell flowers during the weekend nights in addition to begging during the day in order to increase their income. Whether or not this truly make a difference to the overall income generated is hard to say. They explained that there is no fixed price for these flowers, and although some people buy them, many are also ruined by intoxicated people. It is therefore questionable whether or not they really are able to make a profit.¹

The average daily income for the informants is less than what most Norwegians earn in one hour. Most Roma in Kristiansand do not have indoor accommodation which means of course that a financial burden is removed. So if we only consider the financial aspect of it they do not need to generate money for accommodation. However, several of the informants that I interviewed claimed that they would like to have some place they could sleep, and that they would pay for this. So it is not necessarily a question of choice that the majority live outside, it is more a matter of finding someone who would be willing to rent out to them. In fact not having a place to stay is the most voiced concern among the Roma in Kristiansand and it is an

¹ There have been discussions also of illegal income-generating activities among the Roma in Kristiansand. I recognize this debate however; I have not focused on the crime aspect in this thesis.

issue which is talked about as a major challenge. When the fieldwork was initiated, the majority of the Roma people talked to answered that they lived in cars, but as the fieldwork continued, more and more people replied that they lived under the Vestervei-Bridge.

When asked what the most challenging part about being in Norway was; 12 informants answered not to have a place to sleep and eight answered not having a job. These factors were most frequently mentioned as the most difficult aspects that impact their living standard. In addition to these challenges, general grooming, lack of cleaning possibilities, lack of privacy and not being able to send your children to school were some of the challenges that were mentioned. Even being able to fix your hair or to have a minimum of privacy is something that is easy to take for granted once you have it, but faced with a daily life that does not allow these things, something as basic as being able to wash your hair or brush your teeth would be regarded vital and important and thus lack of such an ability is a challenge. Table 1 below shows the frequency of types challenge voiced by informants:

Table 1: Types of challenges

The types of challenges	Frequency
Not have a place to sleep	12
Not having a job	8
Living under the bridge	5
The cold	3
Being away from children	2
Health issues	2
Cleanliness issues	1
Cooking facilities	1
Safety issues	1
The income	1

When considering the challenges that the informants gave, we can see that these are related to the lack of basic necessities. Many of the informants mentioned several challenges and saw them as interlinked. Still, the overarching challenge mentioned by almost all informants was, as one can expect, related to the lack of proper accommodation and employment.

Maria is a 45 year old woman. She has two years of education and has not had any formal employment. Maria has been coming to Kristiansand for over five years to sit in the streets to beg. The money she makes is used to take care of those she left behind. While Maria is in

Kristiansand her parents take care of her four children. What she finds to be the most challenging part about being in the city is that she is away from her family - and that she has to sleep outside.

There are several risks related to sleeping outside; the winter of 2012/2013 was long and cold, and that people up until the end of March had to sleep outside placed them in jeopardy of becoming ill and several feared that they would freeze to death. In addition to the cold, security was another issue raised. As this is a group of people that are marginalized in the society, they are viewed upon negatively and their presence provokes many. It should not be taken for granted that they can sleep safely outside. One could argue that they should find somewhere inside to sleep, but the fact of the matter is that finding someone who is willing to rent out to Roma has, according to my informants, proven to be challenging.

This issue with safety was mentioned also among a group of women that I talked to in a group interview of five of the female informants. Some have had bad experiences with Norwegian men, primarily drug addicts.

Erika is 28 year old and stays in Kristiansand with her husband. As was the case with Maria, Erika is here to earn money to provide for herself and her husband and for those left in Romania. While they are here Erika's parents take care of their three children in Romania. Erika has five years of education, but no work experience. Thus she has had no formal job and is here to earn money through begging. Regarding the situation about feeling secure related to place of living she explained that "some stand on the bridge and pee down at us, they get undressed in front of us, and some have tried to force themselves onto us".

When people live under these circumstances and have these kinds of living standards, with inadequate housing and no employment, the ability to secure a livelihood is reduced substantially. To not have an appropriate place to sleep, enough income to take care of yourself or when you do not feel safe, will prevent development of a decent living standard among the Roma. When basic needs are not provided for properly, also other needs will be neglected or difficult to improve. Thus, improving this situation should be a primary concern. Furthermore, people who stay in Norway should be able to feel secure, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity or reasons for coming here. This concern is what many in the support system around Roma in Kristiansand have addressed and I will discuss this in chapter 7.

We see that poor people are excluded on many levels, and as also raised in the section on theoretical approaches; there is a link between being discriminated against, exclusion and poverty. The Roma people are discriminated against in Romania, this leads to poor and unsecure livelihoods (FRA, October 2009, p. 13). And to turn the coin, when people's living standards are poor, they are also prevented from being involved in important spheres of society, such as employment, financial and political involvement. It is evident that the links between discrimination and poverty affects people; limited access to proper education reduces your chances of finding employment. A majority of those interviewed in this study report that they are excluded from the society, experiencing difficulties with reference to job opportunities for example. This again leads to difficulties in securing a livelihood and therefore they come to Kristiansand seeking opportunities. The Roma informants report that finding work is difficult in Kristiansand as well, also for those that are qualified for a job. Considering that the majority of Roma in Kristiansand live outdoors, and despite that they have access to a sanitation facility, they would not be able, they say, to wash and dry their clothes and look representative for a job.

Being discriminated against and excluded in their home country leads to poverty which again links up with another issue raised in my theoretical approaches, namely the link between migration, development and strategies for poverty reduction. I discussed this also with reference to push and pull factors. Many migrators are motivated by people they know who have migrated to the same area before (de Haan and Yaqub, 2009). This is also true for many of the Roma informants that were interviewed for this study. Some of the informants explain the reason why they have come is that they have family members who stay here. Others came because they had heard from others that Kristiansand was a good place to work/beg. I was also informed that some informants arrange transportation for Roma people who want to come to Norway. Some come to beg, while others believe that they will get a job.

There is potentially several push and pull factors that may impact Roma people that choose to migrate to Norway even though they are not here permanently. According to my informants' inadequate access to education and employment, poor living standards, harassment and discrimination are factors that many Roma are faced with in their home countries and are therefore some of the factors that make people want to leave. What draws them to Norway in particular is for instance the idea that Norway is open and giving- which is what some of the informants explained that they originally believed when they decided to come here. Some are

also influenced to return again when they see that certain basic measures have been put in place. This is at least reported to be the case with Kristiansand. But given that Roma are still faced with great challenges when they are in Norway and Kristiansand it is likely that for most of them the push factors have impacted their decision to migrate the most. The situation in Romania and elsewhere in Europe is far worse than the one in Norway. This is confirmed by the statistics that Amnesty International Norway (3 April 2012) gathered which refers to the status in several European countries and linked to a discussion on motives for choosing to migrate.

5.2 Roma's experiences of bad behavior and harassment

Many of the informants did not have an opinion of being discriminated against. However, those that did seemed to agree that it is the younger people of Kristiansand that most often treat them badly. The type of harassment and violence that the Roma informants experience includes spitting, hitting, kicking and verbal abuse such as people saying things like “go home”, “get a job and “get out of the streets”. Some people choose to be aggressive towards Roma through violence or verbal abuse. There have been incidents where well-dressed people on their way to work have seemingly unprovoked kicked a beggar's cup.

Roma are also denied to stand in front of shops, and to go into dumpsters to collect things they can use. I understood that the female participants in the group interview I undertook thought that it was unfortunate that they are not allowed to find things in the dumpster. And with the amount of stuff and food we throw away, is it perhaps a bit unfortunate that a group is not allowed to utilize what we no longer want. Despite this being an uncommon wish in the Norwegian society, it is understandable that the Roma people would want to do this.

Whenever people have experienced poor treatment in Kristiansand, they explain that this is usually from younger people, most commonly males. Some highlight that this occurs especially on weekend nights, when people may be intoxicated. During the group interview I had with the five women, some of them discussed the difference between people that are kind and people that are mean. They stated that while the elderly, particularly women, are kind to them, young people are not.

When reflecting upon this, Maria voiced that the reason why some young Norwegians treat them badly, can be due to that the younger generation does not necessarily understand their situation. “They have never had the kind of struggles that we have”, she stated.

Maria is into something of importance when she reflects on why elderly is more good-willed towards Roma than young people are. Norway has not always been rich, and Norwegians have not always had the opportunities that the majority of Norwegians have today. It is absolutely possible that some of the elderly remember the struggles that they or their family experienced not that long ago, and therefore want to help other people that struggle. Although there are poor people in Norway, most of them are poor in a relative way, not absolute and the basic needs for the majority of these are met. The majority of people in the generations since Norway discovered oil have not had to worry whether or not they will get dinner that day. Having said this, there are always differences between people and there are of course young people who would not harass and discriminate. There are those involved in volunteer work or those who donate money to Roma people as well. Of course there are also adults and elderly that have prejudice opinions.

Looking at the literature available about Roma people is it clear that the common view is that Roma are discriminated against.

Erika states that after she started to come to Norway, she is more capable of taking care of her family as she earns more money than she was able to in Romania. “We are happy that people help us with what they can, and that they otherwise leave us alone- even the police”. Back in Romania begging is illegal, which leaves people with few options to sustain a living.

Regarding treatment in Romania, many of the informants did share that they feel discriminated against. Their experiences especially include mistreatment from the police.

Gloria, who is 27 years old and has two children back home in Romania, has never had a job and she explained that there is stricter punishment for Roma than Romanians if they make a wrong choice and commit a crime. She stated “I will kill myself if I have to go back to Romania”. Even though I got the impression that this strong statement was to underline the desperation that she feels, it was however hard to tell for sure. Violeta who is 28 years old has also no education and stays in Kristiansand with her husband. While she and her husband are here her crippled mother-in-law takes care of their two children. She adds to Gloria’s story and to the despair they feel when she explained that they are not able to provide their children

with proper education or to have a proper job in Romania. This is why they decided to come to Kristiansand to beg.

Several of the informants had stories that spoke of their hardship, both in Kristiansand and in Romania. Lisa is one of them. She is 52 years old and she has come to Kristiansand over a period of five years. Coming here seasonally is her way of taking care of her four children, her husband and parents. Lisa as most of the other women has no education. She explains that the most challenging thing about being in Kristiansand is where she has to sleep, and additionally that she has to cook her food under the bridge: “We have to cook with fuel, it smells and is dirty”. Still, in Kristiansand Lisa is able to earn about 100 Norwegian Kroner in a day and with that money she does provide for her family. “Life in Romania is difficult, people are constantly skeptical and treat us badly”, she said.

The responses that I got regarding Romania were all quite similar; lack of opportunities for themselves and their children, poor education, poor housing and no access to employment seem to be the common theme, just like the stories of Gloria and Violeta above indicate.

Another informant, Jon, a young man at the age of 18, told me that he has seven years of education. Jon was able to get some work back in Romania, but that he did not always get paid. And he, as many of the informants stated; “I thought it was better here”. Jon is in Kristiansand to earn money to take care of his sick mother and seven siblings.

Even though Roma people have experienced bad behavior or have experiences that will be classified as harassment or even discrimination, it is interesting to find that the majority of the Roma that I interviewed do not perceive themselves as being discriminated against in Kristiansand. There are several reasons for this. One possible interpretation might be that the way they are treated in Kristiansand in many cases is better than what they are used to elsewhere. Kristiansand provides services to the Roma people that most cities do not; a sanitation facility, a container for waste disposal and for a short period of time, indoor accommodation. These offers are likely to be a part of the reason why Roma people do not feel discriminated against. Poor treatment is something that many of the informants have grown up with, and they may feel that the treatment in Kristiansand is comparatively better. The majority of the informants answered questions about the future and stated that they want to live in Norway. A potential reason for this reply might be that the treatment of Roma in Kristiansand as compared to their home country - which again points to the push and pull

factors associated with migration. Another reason could be that the support system in Kristiansand is good at not only facilitating help, also that they are good at communicating directly with them, that they really see the Roma people, follow-up and do work that make a difference in their lives. This however, will be discussed in the next chapter.

5.3 In search of a job and a way to secure a livelihood

Roma people in general report that people in Kristiansand treat them well. However, some of the men I talked to are disappointed.

Adam is 25 years old and is in Kristiansand with his wife trying to make a living, while his grandmother takes care of their four year old son back home. Adam has four years of education, but is in no position to get a job. He originally came to Norway about three years ago because he thought it was better here. He thinks that people are a bit kinder in Kristiansand, but even so it is not as expected. Adam phrases his challenge like this: “I never sit; I go around in the streets trying to talk to people and tell them about my family. People often tell me to leave or get a job. I want to work.”

Begging is thus in many ways seen as a passive action when seen from the part of the giver and sometimes also on the receivers end. However, Roma that are here did make an active choice to come here. It is possible that some of those that are negative towards Roma are so because of their role as beggars. In the example above this seem to be the case. If Roma people got a chance to do some kind of traditional work, unpaid or paid, people could see that they have initiative and keep on employing them. Even though some Norwegian citizens could argue that Roma would take their jobs, the potential drawbacks from Roma doing minor work would likely not exceed the benefits. Perhaps being able to work could prove them able and some of those with negative associations about Roma would lose their prejudice. It is difficult when people fail to recognize Roma as individuals, fail to see their hardship and despite knowing so little about their lives, are provoked solely by the fact that they are here - visible in the urban landscape. It is challenging to understand why people make the choice of doing such a thing. However, my interpretation is that these actions can happen when people see the situation as being “us” versus “them”.

Another informant that shared this challenge of not being included in any kind of work is Christopher. He is a 35 year old male, who is in Kristiansand on the sixth year in order to take care of his two children at home. He feels that he is treated quite similar in Norway as in Romania; there are no jobs, the accommodation is insufficient and there are no chances for his children. With the average amount of 60-70 Kroner is he able to buy food, but it does not really leave him with much left to send home to his family. Christopher hopes for a home, a job and to be reunited with his family in Norway.

Martin is yet another man who expresses his frustration with the opportunities presented to the Roma people. He is an 18 year old male who is in Kristiansand alone, he has six years of education and he is quite new to Kristiansand.

He clearly expressed his frustration when I asked him about how Kristiansand is compared to the other Norwegian city he has been in;

The other city was better, people here seem to be more indifferent and I do not think that my life has improved in any way since I came here. Before I came here I lived in Portugal where I had work on a farm and a place to live. I came here because I heard it was better here, and that people are more open in Norway. I regret that I came here, Martin said.

23 year old Lydia is here with her husband as several of the female informants are. While she is in Kristiansand, her grandmother takes care of her two children back home. She first came to Kristiansand two years ago and she agrees with Martin. Lydia also feels that she is treated the same way in Norway as in Romania. Even though she is able to make money to sustain a living in Kristiansand Lydia said; “we are barely living! And my husband and I do not earn enough to provide for our children.”

When it comes to whether or not their lives have improved since they came to Kristiansand, perhaps we could assume that it at least has not gotten any worse. It might even be somewhat better than if they were not to come to Kristiansand. Otherwise, why would people choose to leave their families and home country, if it wasn't for the better? From a Western perspective the lives of Roma in Kristiansand, and most other Norwegian cities as well, is a life filled with hardship. When people choose to come here, and thus potentially gain some benefits from coming here, is it unpleasant to think of how their lives in Romania actually must be like. Of

course, there are some people that are better off than what we assume, but the majority of people lack some of the most basic necessities.

The way many of the informants are treated in Romania is likely to impact their educational level and also lack of work experience which again impact on their overall struggles for a secure livelihood. When people are excluded from parts of the society this is discrimination, and these experiences leads to poverty. This poverty, whether it is new, absolute or a severe material deprivation, inhibits people from achieving secure lives. There is potentially a link between the discrimination in Romania and the informants responses related to discrimination in Kristiansand due to both the role of the support system here but also how they are treated by citizens in general. If the informants compare how they are treated in Kristiansand to how they are treated in Romania, is it possible that there is such a noticeable difference for most of them that they do not consider bad experiences in Kristiansand to be discrimination, to be of value or they may not even want to focus on these as the overall reaction from the people in Kristiansand is comparatively better.

5.4 Aspirations and thoughts about the future

I asked the informants if there were any changes in their lives since they started to come to Kristiansand. Gloria says that she now has food to eat, which makes life out in the cold a bit more bearable while Violeta explains that they now can provide for their basic needs.

I also asked what the informants' hopes and dreams for the future are, and they all hope for their basic needs to be secured. About half of those interviewed put having a place to sleep and a job on top of their list. In addition to having a home and some form of employment, the women particularly stressed that they wish to provide for the next generation, give education to their children, pay taxes and be treated the same as everyone else. They highlight that they want any type of job, and any type of house.

Maria says "I want to live a life like others, pay taxes, to have a job and a place to live. We are used to be living seven to eight people in one room. Anything will help."

Talking about the future in a wider perspective, 14 people replied that they would like to live in Norway, while three stated that they would like to return and live in Romania.

25 year old Arianna has one child which her parents take care of while she is in Kristiansand. She has five years of schooling and her hope is to be able to live in Norway with her family. She feels that she is treated nice in Norway, but not in Romania. Arianna explains it like this;

If we have to live so poorly, we at least want our children to have better lives. We want them to go to Norwegian schools and be integrated. We want to contribute, earn money and pay taxes. We can do any jobs; clean, pick up garbage and anything else.

The women who participated in the group interview all agreed to the aspirations of Maria and Arianna. The informants' hopes for the future represent what is common life for most of us. People long for nothing more than a home and a job, yet, achieving this is not given. The aspirations that the informants voiced are clearly also influenced by their living standards and experiences in their lives. When basic needs are lacking, does it perhaps seem unrealistic to dream of more than a job and a place to live. In one way, some of these aspirations can be achieved if more initiative is put into finding jobs that Roma can do. A couple of the informants that I interviewed have good work experience, carpentry and tailoring were mentioned, yet they have no job. The majority of the informants, however, especially the women, have little to no work experience, and a low level of education or training. Several of the informants, particularly the women, such as Erika and Gloria stated that they had never had a paid job. This lack of proper training and education, lack of work experience and additionally the language barrier inhibits many Roma from getting employed in Norway.

5.5 Roma as representing the category new poverty

Based on the findings from the fieldwork will I argue that Roma people in Kristiansand fit this thinking about the new poor. Looking at Norway, Roma live in a rich country, yet while Roma people are here they are not stakeholders in this wealth. Romania on the other hand, is not as wealthy as Norway, the country has had to rely on IMF, the World Bank and EU for financial help. But the country has made positive progress (CIA World Factbook, 7 May 2013). However, also in Romania Roma experience to be left out. This situation inhibits them from achieving development as a people in Romania.

38-year-old Roberta explained that she wished that her three children could have more education than she had received. This was a leading factor as to why she wanted to live in Norway. Back home in Romania, her children are not always able to attend school. It depends on whether or not they have the proper clothes and enough food. Going back to Erika, she told me that when she was a schoolgirl, she had to walk between 10- 20 km to get to school, and that walking through a forest was a big part of that road. The pattern of low educational level has continued into the newer generations as well, however, it seems like there is a desire from some of the parents to change this pattern.

Violeta and Arianna talk about some of the challenges in Romania. They share that they are not always able to send their children to school, because they cannot afford food or proper clothes. Not being able to send their children to school adds to the low educational level amongst Roma people and further excludes them from society. Lack of schooling due to poverty is a good example of exclusion from society and links to a debate on the new poverty. When a group of people are excluded from the educational system and the work force, a situation of poverty and conflict arise. In some areas are Roma people found to be 10 times poorer than the rest of the population (Wolfensohn and Soros, n. d. b.). This discussion is again linked to the inter-linkage between migration, poverty and development which was also discussed in the theoretical approach in chapter 4. Some of the Roma informants themselves explain that there are push and pull factors that have impacted their decision to come to Kristiansand to beg. These include the living standards that they are experiencing in Romania. That Roma people continue to come to Kristiansand year after year confirms that the benefits from seasonally migrating here, exceeds the drawbacks. The stories of Maria, Adam and Gloria, all explain some of the push and pull factors that have impacted their decisions to come to Kristiansand as opposed to staying in Romania. The fact that the people choose to leave their homes and families in order to earn a little money might be a reflection of the desperations that they feel.

Based on what the literature says about discrimination of Roma, it was unexpected to find that the majority of the informants in this study do not feel discriminated against. Overall, they argue that their situation after coming to Kristiansand has improved as they are able to care for themselves and their family members at home, especially children and parents. This latter point about the ability to support children and parents underlines the importance of remittances. Although beyond the scope of this thesis it is important to recognize that the

main motivation for the Roma people coming to Kristiansand to beg is that this enables for money to be sent back home improving the situation for family members.

The bad experiences that Roma have had in Kristiansand, which include spitting, being run over by a car and having their belongings set fire on- are by most people perceived to be discriminating experiences. So why do the informants not perceive themselves as being discriminated against? As argued above is a potential cause for this is that they have grown up with discrimination. Due to this, they might not perceive these bad experiences from Kristiansand as discrimination or harassment, as they experience life in Kristiansand as overall better than in Romania. Thus, not having a feeling of being discriminated against can be tied to Roma people's experience of the support system in Kristiansand which will be discussed in the next chapter. That Roma have a place where they can shower and a place where they can get a meal may have an impact on their views about discrimination. The fact that the majority of the informants do not feel discriminated against in Kristiansand may also be a pull factor that make people come. If Kristiansand is a "recommended" city which is advocated for in the sense that it is all right to stay here, due to both facilities, income opportunities and less discrimination these are probably pull factors that may make people want to come to this city above other cities. It has been argued that when certain measures are implemented for Roma, that will lead to an even bigger Roma population. So far this has not happened in Kristiansand, but it is anticipated that the summer of 2013 there will be an increase.

The Roma people living in Kristiansand have voiced a satisfaction with the support system in Kristiansand. Having a sanitation facility, a waste disposal facility and occasional accommodation have made life outside bearable. However, when it comes to the sanitation facility, Christopher states that there is not always enough hot water for everyone and that he does not always get to shower. This has also been reported by other informants and Martin explains: "I have to wait to use the showers, there's often not any hot water left. I have not showered in a week. I want to leave this town- there is too much mafia here."

Christopher's and Martin's experiences links to a situation beyond the relationship between Roma as a people and the support system in Kristiansand and links to internal power relations among the Roma in Kristiansand. Before I end this chapter I will briefly introduce a discussion about internal power relations which will be taken up again also in the next chapter where the support system is discussed.

During my fieldwork I discovered issues linked to power relations within the Roma population in Kristiansand. These are important to highlight and to be aware of, especially for the support system. It might also explain why a feeling of being discriminated against not necessarily is brought up when discussing the relationship between Roma and Norwegians, as internal hierarchies within the Roma group might be of bigger influence as it is related to their own peers as opposed to the treatment from Norwegians.

5.6 Power relations and hierarchy among Roma in Kristiansand

From the first day of interviewing, I had the feeling that a man called Gregor always wanted to be nearby and in control of what was being said. He himself was one of the first people I interviewed. Gregor often showed up when I was conducting interviews. He told me on one occasion that I could “just write the same for everyone. They will all say the same”. He also told one of the younger informants, Jon, to leave when we were talking to him after we had finished his interview.

Towards the end of my fieldwork when I had gotten to know some of the Roma people, or they at least had been used to seeing me, either at the Salvation Army or in the streets, Martin whom I had just interviewed came up to me and my translator and told me some things that I had not been told previously. As Martin came to me as I was just about to have a new interview we agreed to continue talking after my interview with Anna.

After the interview with Anna was conducted, Martin was re-interviewed, and his story gave me information about a system of internal hierarchy, where Gregor is in charge. He belongs to the first family who came to Kristiansand and who has come here over a number of years. Being a member of this family is important to fully take advantage of the support provided to Roma People in Kristiansand. If you are not a member of this family it is more difficult, Martin explained to me. Being the head of this family, Gregor was the one who had the power to decide on for instance, where new coming Roma people were allowed to sit and beg. The main street in Kristiansand called Markensgaten, is expectedly most likely the street where one can earn the most money. The best locations, however, seem to be designated to family members or people that have been here for a longer time. Are you not a member of the family, come from another area or are new to Kristiansand, then you will most likely have to sit outside of the main street.

Thomas is a 38 year old man that had just arrived in Kristiansand a week before I interviewed him. In order to get to Kristiansand, he had had to borrow money to buy a bus fare. He explained that the length of his stay would depend on whether or not he would get a job to provide for his four children. As he had not yet gotten any job opportunities he begged and earned about 50 kroner a day. When asking him about the situation of being in Kristiansand and how he felt about the sanitation facility, sleeping outside etc. I found out that Thomas had not yet heard of the sanitation facility and he also said that he could not sit or sleep wherever he wanted to. Someone decided this for him.

Thomas was sitting outside of the main street when begging. His story confirmed the one of Martin's about coming to Kristiansand and finding a place where one family seemed to be in power, deciding upon important matters like where to beg – while the others had to follow the “rules”. If one is not following the rules or norms for behavior and adjusting to the hierarchy people might experience that they are left alone.

Anna is a 58 year old widow that is new to Kristiansand. In order to get to Kristiansand, Anna had to pay someone 1000 Norwegian kroner in order to get a ride in a car. She has two adult children, so the 50- 60 kroner that she on average has earned in a day are for herself. Anna had not been told about the sanitation facility or any other support for the Roma people in Kristiansand when I talked to her and she said:

I have not been to the welfare center and I hope to go back home tomorrow, but I have to earn more money first...I can sit and beg wherever I want, but I usually eat alone. The people I came here with do not want to help me get home- they say that it is my problem. One family rules here, and I am not one of them.

This contradicts what several of the women in the group interview stated, that they try to take care of each other while in Kristiansand. Examples given where such situations where someone needs money to help a family member back home who is sick, then they all try to give whatever they can spare. What Thomas is describing is quite the opposite and descriptions of the situation in Kristiansand seem to differ depending upon which group of Roma one belongs to.

Consequently, what I discovered towards the end of my fieldwork was that there is a strong hierarchy in the Roma society in Kristiansand and if not a part of the family that seems to be in charge, being in Kristiansand is more difficult. In addition, based on what I was told it seems like at least one of the people that have been here for a long time, offers transportation for Roma that want to come to Kristiansand. Martin for example came here as a result of paying someone to get to Norway. The interest rates, however, are high and he now owes 150 Euros. When I asked Martin what would happen if he did not pay, he almost laughed and said, “if I do not pay, the debt will be doubled”. Martin’s story is confirmed by other newcomers who have paid about 1000 Norwegian kroner to come here and who also experience the interest rates for paying back the money to be high.

The Roma population in Kristiansand is not a homogenous group. There are internal disagreements reflecting power relations and hierarchical structures, and these factors influence how the different members perceive their stay in Kristiansand to be. If a person is included as a part of the family that seem to have more “power”, the experience will most likely be more positive than for a person who is not part of this family and is new to Kristiansand.

It is important to recognize the effect that this hierarchy has on the individual informants in the group I have interacted with. My findings reflect the assumption that it matters how people coming here are perceived by the family in “power” and this implies that the experience of living in Kristiansand will differ according to their placing in the hierarchy. Assigned places to sit and beg will make a difference to a daily income as most people frequent visit the main street as opposed to the other streets. When people experience differences according to income generation it is likely that the support system also will be perceived as different to different Roma linked to whether they are on the “outside” or the “inside”. I have already mentioned access to the sanitation facility for example. Other implications may be access to wash their clothes or possibilities to get employment. I will return to how the support system deals with these differences based on internal power relations in the next chapter.

What is interesting here is that there seem to be a link between being defined as outsiders and the wish to return to Romania. On the other hand, many of the people belonging to the first arriving family claim that they want to live in Norway and they express that there has been some positive changes since they came here (all though life is still hard), and that there is a

sense of a community amongst Roma in Kristiansand. We all have our individual perception of things, and there seem to be at least two different stands: life may be comparatively better for many of the informants I talked to, but there is a smaller group of people voicing a different story. What the experiences of Martin and Anna tell us, is that all though people are able to earn money from begging, their choice of migrating and putting themselves into debt will initially only increase a feeling of despair and instead of migration being a way into a better life, the reverse is true. This is again amplified when they have to sit outside of the main street, which is the profitable street.

Earlier I have discussed the push and pull factors that influence a choice to migrate and these factors have probably also played a part in why so many Roma choose to return to Kristiansand. However, this does not seem to be the case with Martin and Anna. As mentioned earlier Anna did plan to go back to Romania, and given that I have not seen her since the interview was conducted, it seems like she eventually was able to return home. Martin was also not comfortable with the situation and the people who seemed to be in power amongst the Roma in Kristiansand. He did not feel as welcome in Kristiansand as in the other cities that he had stayed in, he therefore wanted to leave Kristiansand to go to another Norwegian city.

As discussed in chapter 4, the literature on Roma show that the living standards for Roma people are generally lower than for the rest of the population. My findings confirm that this is also the case in Kristiansand. What I have discussed here is that the living standard of Roma people in Kristiansand is influenced not only by an exclusion from the Norwegian society but also an exclusion within the Roma society in Kristiansand. These findings from the fieldwork points to the importance of paying attention to power relations when working to improve the living conditions of Roma people in Kristiansand. These findings might also help explaining why the Roma people do not perceive themselves to be discriminated against. Most of the Roma people in Kristiansand experience that they are somehow taken care of by the society at large through the support system, thus the situation is better than in Romania and the feeling of discrimination decreases. However, part of the Roma society feels excluded and thus discriminated against, but this feeling comes primarily from within the Roma society and thus is not necessarily linked to a feeling of being discriminated by the society at large. Those working with Roma people however, do not fully agree to this and claim to be working with an excluded group of people, generally discriminated against in their home country and also

in Kristiansand. I agree to this argument, but my findings indicate that internal hierarchy amplifies the discrimination for some. I will now turn to a discussion of the support system and their perception of life amongst the Roma in Kristiansand.

6 Roma people and the support system in Kristiansand

This chapter deals with my findings from interviewing people within the support system, which are those who work in order to improve the lives of the Roma while they are in Kristiansand. What I refer to when I say the support system is Christian organizations, churches, politicians and private initiatives. I have interviewed representatives from the Salvation Army, the Greek Orthodox Church, the City Mission and the Church of Norway. I have also talked to a politician working in favor of the Roma, more specifically a representative from Venstre. In addition I have talked to representatives from more private initiatives. I will start with a short introduction to the organizations involved in improving the lives of Roma.

6.1 The supporters and their motivation for working with Roma

The Salvation Army has for the last couple of years been involved with the Roma population in Kristiansand. They have a welfare center where people that need to, can come and socialize, have a meal and get a bag of food to take with them. They also receive clothes and sleeping bags. The Salvation Army is also one of the stakeholders that are involved in overlooking the sanitation facility. Kari Klingsheim is responsible for Salvations Army's work towards the Roma, and thus she is also the one that is most in contact with the Roma population.

The Greek Orthodox Church support towards Roma is represented by Father Christofóros Schuff who on several occasions has been somewhat of an advocate for the Roma people in Kristiansand. He has learned the Romani language and has also created an employment service where he has tried to give Roma people paid work. He is also an active part of the support system overseeing the sanitation facility.

The City Mission does support work aimed at people who during different periods of their lives may be struggling. Towards the Roma people they are actively involved as one of five partners overseeing that the sanitation facility is properly cared for. The City Mission also holds mass and runs a café which is open to everyone.

The Church of Norway is also involved in the work with the sanitation facility. The organizations involved have divided the task between them and every six weeks they have the responsibility to overlook that everything is all right at the facility. Pastor Aud Sunde Smemo represents the Church of Norway in their work towards Roma. She underlines that Roma are also welcome to join mass, but there has not been much attendance in church. However, there have been reports that there are Roma women who every Sunday sweeps in front of the Cathedral to get it ready for Sunday mass.

These four Christian organizations make up parts of the support system towards the Roma people. They all agree that they feel an obligation to help people in need, also Roma people. Especially these organizations may feel a responsibility to help this vulnerable group because many Roma are also Christians. These organizations also offer mass which Roma can attend. Moral and humanitarian aspirations are given as the causes as to why the organizations have a support system that offers help and services to the Roma people. Pastor Aud Sunde Smemo from the Church of Norway answers that it is important to care about the wellbeing of the Roma population in Kristiansand because they have been persecuted through most parts of our recent history. “They come from a life in great poverty- a poverty that is a part of a common European responsibility”, Smemo states.

In addition to these organizations, the political party Venstre has also been much involved in advocating for and working with Roma in Kristiansand. Dag Vige has been the major exponent for Venstre in their struggle for Roma’s rights within the city. He is much concerned about the welfare of all people in Kristiansand who struggle in their daily lives and this includes Roma. He has on numerous occasions advocated for the implementation of certain measures, such as the sanitation facility and he has also put much effort into finding accommodation during the cold winter nights. Vige’s motivation for advocating and working for Roma is much alike that of the organizations. It comes as a result of acknowledging that there are people in the city that struggle because of low living standards. Vige is possibly the politician in Kristiansand that has advocated the most for the Roma people. He states: “as chosen by the people, I believe that I have responsibility for those that live here, you have to care about everyone.”

People working with Roma in Kristiansand also refer to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, Art. 25 (UN, n. d.) and also the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Art. 11, nr. 1 (OHCHR, n. d.). These ensure that all human beings are entitled to an adequate living standard and that all states are obliged to ensure this for the people that are within in their country- regardless of whether they are legal or illegal citizens. These notions, in addition to the moral and ethical aspect of having a group of people that struggle in their community are motivating factors for their support. Some of the arguments against aiding Roma in Kristiansand and in Norway in general, are that they are not Norwegian citizens. There have also been arguments of exploitation and the need to criminalize begging. But as members of the support system have argued, regardless of what your opinion about begging is and with reference to the UN, the obligations we have to help people in need cannot be ignored.

6.2 Perceptions of Roma people's lives in Norway and in Romania

Those working with Roma in Kristiansand see a people in need. When it comes to the lives of Roma that are in Kristiansand, Smemo explains that the majority of the Roma population comes here for a specific cause. It can be a medical need, a need to generate income for schooling children or building a home. These are some of the causes that Roma need to earn money. According to Smemo, many miss their family and home, yet most Roma experience that Norwegians are nice.

Both push and pull factors play a role in why people have made the choice of coming to Norway. As discussed in the theoretical approaches, it is possible to separate between the poor and the poorest when it comes to ways of migrating. The poorest may often use cheaper and unsafe ways of migration. This seems to be the case with several of the informants I talked to in this study. They have put themselves in debt to come to Norway and therefore they also delay the potential benefits of coming here.

There seem to be a unanimous view that the municipality should offer Roma (and other homeless people) in Kristiansand; shelter during the coldest nights, toilet facilities and showers. The municipality in Kristiansand has provided for two of these offers with the help

and oversight of the five organizations. All of the people I talked to within the support system enforce that the sanitation facility has served its purpose. They have a place to go to the toilet and to shower and the Roma people clean it themselves. This facility has clearly given Roma in Kristiansand the opportunity to have more privacy and cleanliness, which again has prevented much of the hostility that may come from a lack of such facilities. In other cities, such as in Oslo for example, this lack of toilet facilities has been a huge source to frustration.

Up until Easter, Roma in Kristiansand did not have a place to sleep besides under the Vestervei Bridge. For many of those working for the Roma this situation of no accommodation has been ethically and morally challenging. People have expressed a concern for this group during the coldest nights and many have feared that Roma will freeze to death. The municipality interprets their obligations towards Roma in a way that they are not obliged to provide shelter to Roma. The feedback from those responsible within the health services and social welfare has been that there is no real threat of freezing to death. However many of the people working with Roma in Kristiansand argue that perhaps Kristiansand and Norway have a moral responsibility to help people in need. This interpretation that the municipality has made entails that they are not legally obliged to help. However, the support system argues that if they do not want to take on a legal commitment, should they for ethical and moral reasons still provide shelter to Roma in Kristiansand.

In March 2013, the Roma people that where in Kristiansand was offered indoor accommodation from the Filadelfia Church. Klingsheim was one of the people that were involved when this offer came into place and she explained that they had a total of three apartments that Roma could sleep in while the temperatures where low. Originally the agreement was that this was an offer for two weeks, which was extended with one additional week. The Roma people were themselves responsible for keeping it clean and throwing away garbage. During the day they had to be somewhere else. Between 27-30 people lived in these apartments, which at that time was the entire Roma population in Kristiansand. The different families lived quite separately within these three apartments, and they also made their separate meals. In the beginning there were some challenges related to garbage disposal as garbage was dumped in neighbors' dumpsters, and perhaps not sorted properly. The experiences with this offer of accommodation were good. However there were some complaints from neighbors regarding the frequency of arriving cars near the apartments and

they therefore had to move out after three weeks. However, at that time the temperatures were more pleasant.

When I interviewed Smemo from the Church of Norway about the situation of the Roma, Filadelfia Church, had just offered shelter to the Roma population in Kristiansand. When I talked to her about this she stated: “when the accommodation came into place, I felt that this was OK, now Kristiansand has the chance to be a pioneer city when it comes to the Roma people.”

Having a place to stay is one of the major concerns among the Roma people. The motivation for the organizations helping Roma is the ethical and moral responsibility they perceive that the Norwegian society has. They find it challenging to deny people a place to sleep - especially when there are places that are vacant. This year, a temporary offer was put in place, both for the conscious of the support system and the wellbeing of the Roma population. And possibly also for the conscious of the municipality. The building they stayed in, however is supposed to be demolished, and Filadelfia Church, who are the owners of the place made it clear that this was a temporary offer.

Even though the accommodation that Roma received in the middle of March 2013 was not meant to be a lasting offer it was of great help during cold winter nights. However, the ethical dilemma is not resolved; it was only temporarily under control. Winter will come again and Roma will still have to face cold nights outside.

The effects of the financial crisis in many European countries have impacted many, also Roma. Due to this crisis has there been an increase of non-Roma beggars, and it keeps on rising. According to Schuff, in 2012, three out of 50 people in Kristiansand were not Roma. So far in 2013, seven out of 16 are not Roma (12.03.13). This suggests that the crisis in Europe affects more people. Schuff from the Greek Orthodox Church often receives inquiries from people from Serbia, Greece, Romania and Spain that need work. There seem to be a need for particular employment services for people from several European countries. We see with these figures that the crisis in Europe has affected more people, more people are on the edge of poverty, and thus they make the choice of going to another country. What is also happening according to Schuff is that the financial crisis has resulted in a situation where Romanians and Roma have joined each other.

As Schuff points out, people from several European countries, have come to Norway recently. In some senses this may simply move the trouble from one country to Norway. The factors that made people leave in the first place, such as lack of work, will only continue to be a challenge when many people arrive to Kristiansand and Norway, perhaps especially when there are social differences between these groups of people.

Referring to my theoretical approaches, where I argued that poverty make people migrate to other places to deal with their situation. As stated, the situation in Europe has made more people come to Norway. This implies that the already limited resources that Roma people in Kristiansand have, may become even scarcer. As also discussed in the literature review, when a country experiences such challenges as the financial crisis, this potentially will lead to frustration, anger and competition, which again will largely affect those that already struggle the most. The increase in Roma beggars in Norway throughout the last years is also a result of the increasing crisis in Europe. Considering the discussions about migration, one can imagine the pressure people must be under to choose to leave their homes, and initially increase the financial trouble they already are experiencing.

Back in their home countries many members of the Roma population who are presently in Kristiansand own their own houses, at least those who live in rural areas. Those that live near urban areas primarily live in shacks. The houses are of poor quality and they often lack running water and electricity. However, as Schuff states; “what is interesting with Roma is that they live quite organically with small patches of land and they are good at growing food”. He explains that the women find food scraps that they feed their pigs with which they later sell or eat themselves. This is a form of recycling. According to Schuff the way Roma secure a living is through a system where they take from “nothing” – turning it into something – and thus finding income sources. These opportunities for recycling are not possible in Norway as it is forbidden to take food and other items that have been thrown away.

6.3 The support system’s view on mistreatment and harassment

Those involved with the Roma people have witnessed and been told about what they see as discriminatory behavior. They report on multiple occasions, both against the sanitation facilities and against the Roma people themselves. They also talk about harassment of Roma

on the Internet. There has been tagging on the facilities, arson, threatening behavior under the bridge and one incident when someone drove over a beggar's foot and kept driving. People have peed in Roma's sleeping bags and poured paint from the bridge down on their clothes, and these are just some of the examples.

Having reported on such incidents, Klingsheim still argues that it is not as bad here as other places. Her impression is that there is more goodwill than discrimination in Kristiansand and many donate clothes and money. Schuff has also seen that there are times when Roma seem to be treated better; "they seem to receive more support after harassment incidents, but it quickly shifts back to what is normal". Consequently, for shorter periods after such incidents as referred to above there is a situation of being treated more nicely. However, since this is only visible shortly after being treated badly it seems that this situation of being treated better is generally only short-term. Gunnarson from the City Mission states: "the way I perceive discrimination, they are discriminated against in the way we react to them". He explains this as the fact that existence is more challenging for Roma is discrimination. They have to prove their existence; they are met with mistrust and discrimination. He argues further that trust should be the starting point for our dialogue with Roma. Roma people are met with bad attitudes. They are watched closely and we keep an eye on them to see if they clean up after themselves and so on. Schuff adds to this argument that the Roma people have close to zero chance in the housing market, challenges with employment, which is also due to language barriers and lack of competence. Schuff personally believes that if they are given the opportunity to work, they can improve their reputation. Roma people are faced with distrust both when it comes to possibilities for work and for housing. As discussed in chapter 5, many of the Roma people would have liked a place to rent, but they experience difficulties in the renting market. This leaves Roma with few possibilities.

When I interviewed Dag Vige, temporary accommodations was not offered to Roma. I asked him what he thought of this; he said that "it's embarrassing". I then learned that the municipality had just decided to look into providing some kind of accommodation for Roma. Vige argued that he gets the impression that people do not have enough empathy for what it is like to be poor. He sees it as our responsibility to help people if they cannot provide for themselves; "helping people to get their basic needs met is the basis of the welfare society." Roma people however, are not supported by the welfare system. They are entitled to basic health care and aid when life and health is in danger, but it does not include shelter when it is

the coldest. It is ethically challenging for all those working with Roma to accept that a group of people have to sleep outside in the cold, and they all link their arguments to our responsibility as a people and society to help. Thus, not helping is also a form of discrimination.

Those in dialogue with Roma people in Kristiansand are all concerned with the bad treatment that Roma experience from time to time. The overall concern however goes beyond these incidents and they are concerned with the structures that also in Norway seem to exclude Roma people and further discriminate them as a people.

6.4 Why the support system sees discrimination

It is interesting that the support system perceives that Roma are being discriminated against, while Roma themselves do not necessarily feel the same. There is more than one potential answer to why this is the situation. One is that the support system interprets Roma's situation from another point of view than Roma themselves do. As Norwegians, we are perhaps more aware of potential discrimination as the majority of us have not experienced discrimination in this way. Thus we easily see discrimination. When several of the informants from the support system talks about incidents where people are harassed, whether being hit by cars or seeing their sanitation facility set on fire they assume that this is linked to the fact that Roma are Roma. So why do the majority of Roma informants not feel that discriminated against? Why did they not mention many of these examples? Not mentioning these incidents could of course be seen as a coping mechanism to not hold on to bad experiences. If you throughout your life have experienced harassment and discrimination you are perhaps faced with the choice of whether or not to move past this.

Another reason for the different interpretations is exactly what was suggested above, linked to the actor-structure divide. The support system sees discrimination also in the overall societal structure or at the macro level, which perhaps individual Roma informants did not think of during the interviews. For those working in the support of Roma the fact that a group of people fall between categories and thus do not get the aid that many of them so desperately need is perceived as discrimination. As Norwegians we are used to having our voices heard, either through the media or advocates. This has not been the case for Roma. Although there

are spokespeople for Roma in Norway today, there has in the past been a lack of such advocates, who have the respect and power to impact and influence.

My data suggest that the support system clearly see the link between discrimination, exclusion and poverty that was discussed in the theoretical approaches. It appears that the support system acknowledges these links and attempt to help reduce them. The basic necessities that Roma are provided with in Kristiansand, do not only help them on the most basic and needed level. It is also meant as an important compassionate effort that potentially can show Roma, and also Norwegians that these people are acknowledged and that they do have value. Just like everyone else.

As mentioned in the theoretical approaches, poverty does also include the lack of access to education, housing and employment. Roma are perhaps the group in Norway that are hardest affected by the lack of opportunities. As they come to the country as EEA citizens, they are not met with measures that will include them in society compared to other in-coming groups. They are not immediately entitled to what we consider to be some of the basic aspects of our welfare state; free education and housing support. Roma people are themselves responsible for their own welfare while they are here in Norway and when you lack the most basic necessities this is not an easy task. Since none of the Roma that were interviewed speaks Norwegian, besides from a few basic words, it is also very challenging to find employment. In this way, the spiral of challenges they meet continues.

6.5 Thoughts about responsibilities of Roma people themselves

In my study I wanted to find out what the support system felt that the Roma people themselves should do in order to help reduce prejudice. One of the factors that were repeated was the importance of keeping the area under the bridge clean. A container was recently provided for so that Roma themselves can deposit garbage and keep the area clean. Like previously discussed, the opportunity to keep things clean is hampered when there is no way to dispose of the garbage. With the container that was provided the spring of 2013, Roma are now able to keep their part of the deal.

Another issue emphasized was the possibility for Roma people to contribute to the society. Klingsheim says; “when offered, the Roma people should participate in projects such as cleaning beaches, that way they can make an effort that also benefits the society”.

Klingsheim also recommends Roma to be humble when they beg. This includes not being aggressive, but rather sitting quietly and praying. They should also attempt to keep it neat and clean wherever they are. When Klingsheim recommend Roma to be humble this is raised as a consequence of expressions by Norwegians as perceiving foreign beggars to be too loud or aggressive and acting in another way than Norwegian beggars have done in the past.

Gunnarson linked this issue on how to behave when begging to an overall debate on how we have to attempt to influence people when we try to raise money. I think this is an interesting point. In order to get money is it often necessary to move people in one way or another, like we for instance see during the "Artist Galla" that is held in Norway every year. Here artists and celebrities share stories from when they went to a developing country and met the people there, and how it impacted their lives. Such events always raise a lot of money and one of the reasons is that these stories make an impression on people. The link between appearance and activity in order to get money is of relevance when it comes to begging. Roma people that beg have to behave and dress in certain ways in order to get money.

The employment service that Schuff led from the summer of 2012 worked well. However, it all depended on received work offers from the people in the area. It was primarily work with painting houses that they were offered, but any type of work could have been relevant to Roma. Schuff explained that it is a demand that workers be paid in accordance with the wage agreements in order to avoid social dumping. The experiences have been good, and according to him the feedback has been solely positive. Thus if Roma get the possibility to work it is important to perform well. Schuff has as earlier argued that being preoccupied with the link between having a job and being able to provide for oneself and the way Norwegians think about and talk about Roma. If they work and earn money this may change attitudes towards Roma.

6.6 Challenges with helping Roma and some ways out of difficulty

Klingsheim states that there have been some challenges related to Roma's presence at the Salvation Army's welfare center. There is a mixture of people coming to the welfare center

including Roma, drug addicts and people with a low income. The entrance of Roma did cause some friction. People already accustomed to the Salvation Army did not approve of the inclusion of Roma. They did not feel like sharing with these “other people”. However, as users have become accustomed to each other and experienced that there is room for all, it has helped reduce prejudice. The most important step is that every user of the welfare center understands how the system works and follows the rules. For Roma this also includes the use of the sanitation facility under the Vestervei Bridge. There have been some incidents where Roma have claimed not to be sleeping in the facilities, and it has turned out that they have. This however has changed, and Roma seem to follow the rules and regulations.

What was repeated as a challenge was often related to cleanliness and garbage. It is only recently that a container was provided under the Vestervei Bridge. An example that Smemo provided is that when Roma’s clothes get wet, if they have nowhere to dry them they throw it away and get new clothes from the Salvation Army. Thus the area often looked untidy and it was when Roma first got a container they could use that the problem improved. Roma seem to keep the area clean, but there are also cases where Norwegian people place stuff under the bridge that they hope Roma people can use. “It is all in good faith”, Smemo says, but many of these things are not what Roma need, and thus it piles up and eventually the place looks untidy and unclean.

Another and much more difficult issue was also raised when discussing challenges, and this relates to crime. There have been reports about crime within the Roma community in Kristiansand. As I said in the former chapter I have not gone into these aspects in my thesis, I do acknowledge however that the challenge is there. The support system also acknowledges the problem of crime. However they are against a tendency to criminalize poverty, and they urge for a differentiation in the terms used. When discussing challenges Gunnarson says; “there is also the debate about crime; I am concerned with distinguishing between people, and not to generalize”. Gunnarson further argues that generalization is a danger, regardless of which group the generalization is aimed at. As is the case also among Norwegians there are also challenges with crime linked to the Roma people who are in Kristiansand. Just like the fact that not all young, Norwegian men are criminals, not all Roma men are criminal. There will always be people that make wrong decisions and exploit situations – this is inevitable. However, when a group is treated a certain way because of the wrongdoings of some individuals, that should be seen as discrimination. As was discussed in the theoretical

approaches, there is a link between discrimination and poverty; if we refuse to help someone because of an act that someone else has committed, we are only amplifying their poverty.

Another challenge mentioned is related to the competition amongst the different groupings within the Roma society in Kristiansand. These internal groupings differ in size, from two to seven. I discussed in the last chapter that there seem to be a general divide between the family that has been here for many years and the new comers. The challenge with different groupings is easier to recognize and face when one has good knowledge about the culture of a group. According to Schuff there is general rule amongst Roma beggars in Romania that they are not allowed to be where other groups are. In Kristiansand there has been some competition as to who should use the sanitation facilities, get employment services, park their cars at the parking lot and sleep under the bridge. On some occasions these conflicts were resolved by providing employment services every other time to the different groupings within the Roma population in Kristiansand.

The support system in Kristiansand has a general knowledge about different groups of Roma in Kristiansand. Just like in every other community, one should not take for granted that there are no internal conflicts in the Roma community in Kristiansand. With a lack of resources such internal conflicts may be more prone to arise. Roma in Kristiansand have to struggle for their income, and jobs do not come by often. It is only to be expected that when jobs actually come by these are highly valued. Schuff's choice of offering jobs to the groups every other time is therefore a good tool to prevent conflicts internally. However, this may fail to recognize that there are potentially more than two groupings, and that there are people that are not part of any of these groupings and therefore may not reap the benefits that a job may lead to since they are here alone.

During a follow-up interview with Klingsheim, we discussed the presence of hierarchy in the Roma population in Kristiansand. Klingsheim has identified this hierarchy, but argue that for the support system this is very challenging to face. She acknowledges that there is an internal hierarchy, and sees that the families in most instances sleep and eat separately. Klingsheim agreed that these factors are important to be aware of. However, the Roma informants that expressed frustration with this internal hierarchy, were also very concerned about confidentiality, thus at this stage it is important to treat people as equal as possible. As the situation is today, the "powerless" will not benefit from any confrontation or negative

treatment of the “powerful”, Klingsheim argued. Thus Klingsheim works towards the Roma as belonging to one Roma community and does not display any knowledge of the differences within the group, even though she does see the different groupings.

Before I in the next chapter enter into a discussion of how the perceived needs of the Roma correlates with the support system in place in Kristiansand I will end this chapter with a brief comment on all the private initiatives and goodwill which complements the more organised, long term support.

6.7 Private initiative to improve the conditions for Roma

In addition to the support system made up of Church organizations and politicians, there are several other organizations and people in Kristiansand who take a private initiative to help Roma. One such initiative has been mentioned above, when Filadelfia Church arranged for accommodation on an ad-hoc basis during the cold period in March 2013. Another is Red Cross which is involved in looking after the sanitation facility.

There are also private people who have invited people into their homes to stay or provided them with small jobs. Other initiatives include small acts of goodness such as giving clothes and things perceived as needed. Many of the Roma informants reply that they have received food, clothes, shoes and gifts from individuals when they are sitting in the streets. There are also reports on people who offer food or a cup of coffee to Roma during the day. What seems to be the norm is that these people are adults or elderly people. Roma people express gratitude towards this kind of help. This secures Roma while here. However, the main contribution from private people, and the reason why Roma are here in the first place, comes from people's willingness to put a couple of kroner in a beggar's cup. Clothes and food aside, the important issue for the Roma people is the money they earn because this helps them secure a livelihood, not only while here, but also when going back where most of them have children and parents to provide for.

What was repeated when I talked to some of the people who give money or help in any way is that this goodwill stems from the recognition that this is a group of poor people that are struggling. It is help based on the humanitarian and ethical responsibility that these informants

feel. The extra initiative that some people make is caused by the recognition that whether or not one agrees with what they do here, they are poor and they experience hardship.

Additionally, Roma people from Romania are EEA- citizens and as a rich country we do have an obligation to help.

One of the informants, Jonas also argued that it does us “good” to see a group that struggles – to acknowledge that there are people in our society that have challenges related to poverty.

This can make us more aware of how lucky we are to be living in Norway and also make us more aware of the world we all live in. It forces us to reflect as it makes us think about our opinions, values and how we perceive others.

7 Responsibilities of authorities and efforts to prevent discrimination

This chapter looks at the third research question where I am concerned with the way findings from question 1 and 2 may shed light on how to work towards improving living standards and reducing discrimination against Roma in Kristiansand and beyond. It is related to the policies and programs that have been implemented to help the Roma population in Kristiansand. I am interested in how the perceived needs of the Roma correlate with the support system. This chapter also discusses the findings regarding the role of local authorities, the overall society and the rights of Roma in general. This part consists of findings from the interviews with both Roma informants and the different representatives from the support system and is analyzed up against what was discussed in the literature review and the theoretical approaches.

7.1 The role of local authorities

In the previous two chapters I have discussed the perceived needs of the Roma themselves and I have focused on organized support towards the Roma in Kristiansand. This support relies also on the local authorities, and Kristiansand municipality has been involved in much of the work towards Roma. Especially the sanitation facility and the container for garbage disposal are measures put in place with the help from the municipality.

What the responsibility of the municipality should be, has been, and is continuously being, discussed and it seems like there is room for interpretation here. Gunnarson from the City Mission says that he perceives the authorities as taking some responsibility for Roma. They have after dialogue with the stakeholders involved, provided funding for the sanitation facilities. He explains that there has been discussion of whether or not to provide shelter when it is very cold, but that the topic quickly shifted to whether or not one as a municipality is obliged to provide accommodation or not. In the views of the municipality this is not their responsibility. Thus, while the majority of the informants from the support system see this problem of accommodation as an actual responsibility, and that finding a solution is imperative, the municipality has decided against such efforts.

Some of the discussion about helping Roma deals with the idea of helping Roma people while they are in Romania instead of helping them here in Norway. Through EEA, millions of Norwegian kroner are given to aid Roma in their home countries. However as Klingsheim argue; “we experience that there is a long way from the top to the bottom on the social ladder in Romania. Some of the money that is sent to Romania could be used to help Roma that are here in Norway”. Consequently, the support system in Kristiansand comprising of Church organizations and dedicated people within these organizations do to some extent work in collaboration with the municipality, but they obviously do not agree on all efforts. The arguments from many of the informants in the support system are that measures towards the Roma from the municipality’s side should not replace personal commitment. It is supposed to be mutual work. There is a general belief in the moral obligation that we as Norwegians face in our meeting with Roma and the municipality should take part in collaborative efforts towards Roma. In particular this concerns the problem of accommodation, but also helping Roma to find work. The argument is that even though there is no legal responsibility, there should at least be a moral responsibility towards these people. Vigé states: “the municipality is the public authority which operates closest to those that arrive. The municipality must have the responsibility of endeavoring “equal rights” to different groups”. This of course concerns finding a solution to the problem of accommodation, but it is also linked to the issue of finding more sustainable solutions for income generation. The overall experience of the Salvation Army is that the majority of Roma people in Kristiansand want a job. Klingsheim argues that this is something that the authorities could help with. The overall aim should be that the work offered should be long term and a sustainable solution, especially as Norway increasingly will be dependent of foreign labor, Klingsheim argues.

When people are not able to work, this easily enforces already present prejudice against this group, and will make it very challenging to move out of poverty. When the authorities neglect to provide Roma with important facilities or to help them apply for work, this only enforces the already severe situation they are in. Acknowledging that this is a group of people that has been ill-treated for generations is important and should be the backdrop of an engagement towards helping them to become more financially independent.

Like the literature review has shown, there are certain aspects about Roma’s lives that should affect both the authorities and citizens alike. Research shows that Roma are discriminated against on so many levels in their home countries, that their human rights are violated and that

their ability to develop and improve their lives is hampered by discrimination. Those involved in the support system for Roma in Kristiansand work with people with this situation in mind. The support system sees it as we all as human beings are part of a common responsibility towards each other. Thus when the local authorities neglect to acknowledge their responsibility the result is that an already poor group becomes even poorer. Having said this, one should not underestimate the efforts already made by the municipality. The continued discussion about what to do or how to organize around the Roma population in Kristiansand shows that there is engagement. Kristiansand has not yet come to a situation as seen in other cities, where the Roma are being criminalized. Despite reports on crime and voices who argue strongly for criminalization of begging, there seem to be a different approach towards Roma in Kristiansand. Perhaps the strong voices who argue the case of helping the Roma people in Kristiansand are the strongest voices and that there is somehow a resonance in the people inhabiting this city. The question though is whether the support provided is the support needed for the Roma people who come here.

7.2 Organized support as a response to perceived needs?

As I have discussed in the last chapter, the opportunities that Roma have in Kristiansand include the Salvation Army's welfare center, which is open two days a week and the sanitation facility near the Vestervei Bridge. These are the only initiatives that the Roma people use on a regular basis. Roma have also had access to employment services organized by Schuff from the Greek Orthodox Church. He says that they have been working with an idea of setting up a Norwegian course, but then the challenge has been that some people are here short-term while others are here long-term.

The activity they all co-operate on is the sanitation facility. This support to the Roma also includes Kristiansand Municipality as they provided funding. In 2012, the Municipality gave funds to provide homeless people, such as Roma, with a sanitation facility. The Roma people themselves keep it clean while five stakeholders have an overall responsibility for the facility. The City Mission, the Salvation Army, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Church of Norway and also Kristiansand Red Cross/ Vest-Agder Red Cross are the five stakeholders that collaborate on the maintenance of this sanitation facility, which was put up in August 2012. Each stakeholder has the responsibility every six weeks to oversee that Roma take

responsibility for cleanliness. Gunnarson from the City Mission states that this has been a success; “we see that this works well, the Roma people have themselves kept it clean”.

In the beginning of January 2013, when the snow started to melt, a new debate about cleanliness was again initiated. This time concerning garbage disposal and which resulted in a container being placed next to the facility. This gives the users of the facility somewhere to put their garbage. Since this container came into place cleanliness has not been an issue. In the end of April, a place to dry wet clothes was also put in place. This gave people living under the bridge an opportunity to dry their clothes instead of having to throw them away. There is a close link between what is offered and the needs of Roma when it comes to sanitation and garbage disposal. With these facilities in place it is possible to live with some decency under the Vestervei Bridge. One of the things that the Roma informants shared, however, with reference to the sanitation facility was the lack of enough hot water in the facility. This meant that not everyone was able to use the showers. This can be linked to issues of internal hierarchy which some of the informants raise as a concern. As long as the support system are unwilling to look into the different groupings’ use of the support it is difficult to state that this is the case, but at least the possibility that some may benefit more than others is there and should be attended to. Given the responses from some of the Roma informants regarding internal hierarchy and the lack of enough hot water there is potentially a limitation to how well the facility has worked for all.

Another issue was also raised, regarding access to the facility, which reflects different understandings as seen from Roma and the support system. In the beginning the reply I got from Roma people regarding their use of the facility was that they were sorry it was closed. I later realized that what they meant was that they are not allowed to sleep in the facility. Generally the Roma informants had trouble understanding why they could not sleep in the adjoining room that had heating. It is understandable that they question this as they see an empty room with heating and would of course like to sleep there. However, the support system, or those overseeing the facility has to deny such an arrangement. Several of those involved in overseeing that Roma did not sleep inside reported that they found it ethically and morally difficult to deny people to sleep inside the facility when it is as cold as it was in the winter of 2012/2013. With temperatures that often were below minus 10 degrees, many found it challenging that Roma had to sleep outside. However, due to fire regulations in Norway this room is declared unfit for sleeping in. As previously written, the sanitation facility has

according to the support system worked as intended, although there have been a few irregularities. There were some incidences where someone broke into the facility to sleep in the warmth. Furthermore there have been incidents where Norwegians have vandalized the facility.

The issue of accommodation has not yet been solved in Kristiansand, and there is disagreement on this matter and I will return to this issue below. The need for accommodation for the Roma and the measures in place within the support system and offers within the renting market display a gap between needs and what is offered. During the winter of 2013 a private initiative from the Filadelfia Church came into place. A more permanent solution to the problem of accommodation however is needed.

In addition to sanitation, garbage disposal and accommodation, those involved in working with Roma also emphasize the need for inclusion into the overall society. With Roma living under the bridge and spending their day begging in the streets, it is problematic to work for inclusion. Many of the different organizations that are involved with the co-operative effort with the sanitation facility also have other offers towards Roma. For instance the City Mission has Thursday mass, and there is also a monthly mass in the Cathedral. In addition there is also an open café. These offers are open to everyone, including Roma. However, these services have been little used by them. The support system would like to see Roma attending these activities as they see long-term benefits of Roma attending activities and mass with the citizens of Kristiansand. The presence of different groups in these activities is a good start for reducing prejudice and hostility. But since these offers are not used by Roma it is difficult to say anything about the effects of Roma attendance in these activities regarding inclusion. It is possible that a lack of attendance reflects a gap between needs of Roma and what is offered. However, that these activities are less known to Roma and therefore not used is also a possible explanation.

Besides from the offer from the Salvation Army, many of the Roma informants were not aware of policies and programs that are aimed to help them. However, all 23 that use the opportunity from the Salvation Army were happy with the help they got, and they especially mention Kari Klingsheim, who has been working a lot with the Roma population in Kristiansand. The fact that the informants replied that they were not aware of any other offers than the welfare center, may indicate several things; one is that they are not made aware of

other offers. Another potential cause is that they do not consider these offers to be that relevant, at least compared to the welfare center since it provides them with food and occasionally new clothes. There is also the potential that the Roma people are so satisfied with what the welfare center has to offer that they find it to be sufficient. My data suggest that both other activities are unknown or not considered as important.

Many aspects have to be considered when looking at the Roma people's ability to learn of and get to know the support system. Among other things, it is important to bear in mind that some of the migrants are here on short-term stays, some of them are also newcomers and thus it takes time to get to know a place and the facilities offered. As argued above, Roma people do not operate as a group, rather there are several groupings, and there seem to be no interest in sharing information about the support one can get. Newcomers have reported about being in Kristiansand for quite some time before being introduced to the sanitation facility or the welfare center. Thus the support system may from time to time not be able to target all Roma in need with their immediate assistance such as providing food, clothes and a sanitation facility. The more long-term aim of inclusion into the overall society is also a challenge as many are here on a short-term basis. Even though some keep on returning on a seasonal basis, the draw backs of this type of migration with the majority staying in Kristiansand for such a short time period is that they are unable to fully get to know the Norwegian society. This may in fact also prevent the Roma from making an effort to become more integrated.

Having said this, people do keep on returning and as discussed in the theoretical approaches, it is possible to argue that the Roma people in Kristiansand chooses to do so because of pull factors in Kristiansand. That Roma people experience that they are not as discriminated against as in other cities may explain why they choose to come back to Kristiansand. That certain basic services are available to them may also be an explaining factor that influences Roma people to return to Kristiansand. Consequently, there seem to be a correlation between what is offered to Roma in Kristiansand and the perceived needs of those coming here. Although the support system would have liked to see more collaboration with the municipality on certain issues, such as accommodation and even though there seem to be gaps between what is offered and what is perceived as needs among Roma, the efforts towards Roma in Kristiansand seem to be valued.

7.3 Consensus and interaction: is Kristiansand different?

Kristiansand is not the only city that has provided accommodation and a sanitation facility to the Roma people. However, Kristiansand is comparably one of the better cities, precisely because of the sanitation facility and accommodations and the way this has been organized in Kristiansand. Churches and organizations seem to have recognized that they have a moral obligation to help people in need. Although there are negative voices, both virtually and physically, these have not gained as much attention as in other cities. The debate about the Roma people in Oslo, for example, seems to be much more outspoken.

It is not clear-cut what separates Kristiansand from for instance Oslo, but the majority of the informants argue that there is a smaller number of Roma in Kristiansand. At the most, there are up to 50 people, but for the most part of the year it is far less. There are approximately three families that are in Kristiansand, in addition to individuals that come without their family. Klingsheim points out that the size of the city may play a part as well. It is not as easy to distance yourself in Kristiansand as in Oslo where there are far more people. If you walk in the city center of Kristiansand over a period of time, you are likely to recognize some of the Roma beggars sitting in the streets.

Another aspect raised by some in the support system is that there is less crime in Kristiansand and the general impression is that Roma in Kristiansand are not organized. These are two important aspects, as the extent, or assumed extent of crime and organized begging will have an impact on people's feelings about Roma. There have of course been discussions about whether or not Roma in Kristiansand are organized. We also see discussions about reports on crime, however, it may seem like the negative voices are not as loud as in other cities. The criminalization approach has not gotten the same attention in Kristiansand. I will also argue that it seems like the voices that argue for a humanitarian approach towards Roma are more present and have received more support than the one criminalizing Roma people and their presence.

An additional point is that the focus from media has been more positive in Kristiansand than in other cities. Initially when it was decided that a sanitation facility would be provided, there was a lot of resentment. However, it may seem like there has been some positive benefits

from establishing this facility. Now that they have the facility to use, Roma are not forced to use parks and public places as toilets, thus a source of frustration about them being here seem to be gone. It may also be that more people have realized the link between discrimination, exclusion and poverty, and that they acknowledge that there is a humanitarian need for certain measures to be put in place for this group. It may also be that the culture at “Sørlandet” – the area that Kristiansand is located in, is a bit different than some other areas. That Christian organizations play a vital role towards Roma is evident. However, there are also politicians that are eager to make a positive difference in the Roma population’s lives in Kristiansand. In my work this has been exemplified by Venstre and Dag Vigle. The latest suggestion from Oslo, not to allow people to sleep in parks, also includes Venstre, and clearly Dag Vigle has stated that he does not agree with them.

All of these factors are likely to play a part as to why it may seem like there is a difference in Kristiansand. With that said, there are plenty of stories of mistreatment, harassment and discrimination. Still, based on my findings, it seems like there is, at least to a large extent, consensus amongst those involved in the support system on the way to work with the Roma population in Kristiansand. The five stakeholders that are involved in looking after the sanitation facility is an example of this joint interaction. These five stakeholders are able to cooperate with each other in order to ease the burden of the responsibility - and to make this facility the best that it can be for Roma.

It could be a good idea for the actors within the support system to in cooperation design a mission statement. That is a tool to increase the chances of success by reaching a consensus on how to interact with one another, with Roma and the municipality. If the support system creates a mission statement, or something similar to this, can there be a “strength in numbers” situation. This in turn, may increase the chances of all stakeholders and responsible actors being involved in the process of providing Roma with the basic necessities. Additionally a common mission statement may also facilitate an account of what the next step forward should be.

7.4 The importance of the human rights discourse in Kristiansand

There is little research on Roma and their everyday life in Norway compared to their lives in other parts of Europe. In my study I therefore wanted to discuss with people in the support

systems and get their opinion on this seemingly lack of interest in the Roma situation among researchers in Norway. Smemo, although uncertain about the cause, thinks that a lack of interest perhaps is due to the way we have become accustomed to Roma not being included. Or maybe the problem with poverty in Europe is so complex that no one bears to deal with it. There seem to be a form of resignation towards the problem of the Roma people, she states. Klingsheim, also points out that doing research on this group may put people under extra pressure as it is an unpopular topic that causes debate. As she points out, it is also a rather new phenomenon in Norway; in addition the history of how Norway has treated certain minority groups can make people reluctant to do research on Roma. All of these potential explanations are interesting, and they may all play a part in the limited Norwegian research on Roma.

A good point that Smemo raises when discussing the lack of knowledge about Roma in Norway is that we as Norwegians and as a welfare state are likely to increasingly meet this group of people. We thus need to find out how Roma should be received when they get here. What opportunities we can give them and what we can do to help them, either here or in the countries they are from. Policies need to be put in place, and the current situation with national fumbling is not sufficient. Many from the support system in Kristiansand also argue against the on-going criminalization of poverty as we see it in Oslo for example. Smemo argues that we are obliged to help these people; “for me the Roma people are my Christian siblings, who live under great poverty and whom have been persecuted through generations”.

For a long time Roma voices have not been heard, and this may explain why there has been little focus on Roma and their rights. It is often the case that those who speak the loudest are those who are heard, and it seems to have taken some time for the general public, organizations and authorities to fully realize the needs of this group of people - also in Norway. There have been few spokespersons for the Roma and in particular a lack of spokespersons that have been loud enough, compared to other marginalized groups of people. There is to some extent competition over people's attention, and the needs of Roma have been neglected to the benefit of others' needs.

According to the informants from the support system in Kristiansand there is a need for clear attitudes from politicians, both centrally and locally. A clear policy will impact people's attitudes towards Roma and the Roma people's lives. Beyond a doubt the argument is that efforts towards the Roma people should be based on an obligation towards human rights and

thus funding, supporting initiatives and raising awareness and knowledge are some of the measures that should be implemented. Locally, the municipalities should “face its responsibility” and in collaboration with organizations and churches work towards improving Roma’s lives. According to the spokespersons in Kristiansand it is about acknowledging that we as human beings have a moral responsibility for a person that lives in need in our proximity. It may therefore be of great importance if the authorities, the municipality, the support system and other invested parties, agreed on how this group should be met. Although there seem to be some differences amongst the cities in Norway, some general guidelines should be put in place. This will allow for people to be met with the same opportunities and responsibilities throughout Norway.

As the Roma people often fall between different categories within the legal system they often end up with limited rights. However, there are certain rights that Roma are protected by, regardless of how we perceive Roma or which “category” they belong to. Smemo highlights what was also discussed in the beginning of this thesis; that human rights state that everyone is entitled to be treated with dignity. Smemo argues there is a need to acknowledge that a life of dignity entails not living in fear of freezing to death, to have a minimum of private life and to experience to have more value than “only” being a poor person. This human rights discourse seems to underpin much of the motivation in the more organized work towards the Roma in Kristiansand, and also within the private initiatives.

7.5 Internal hierarchy amongst Roma: the pitfall of generalizing

My findings from interviewing the support system in Kristiansand show that they perceive Roma as being discriminated against. When they argue this they refer to Roma as a group more generally and within the Norwegian society. The support system in Kristiansand does make a difference to the Roma who are here and the aim is to help with inclusion and secure the livelihood of Roma in Kristiansand. It is however important to acknowledge the potential challenges within the group they are aiming to help. As in any society, some people will have more power than others; this is also the case with the Roma. There are people that may not reap the benefits due to hierarchical structures within the Roma population in Kristiansand. It is crucial for the support system to be aware of these relations in order to give the best help,

which every member can benefit from. My findings do not indicate that the begging in Kristiansand is organized to the extent that some people claim it is, but it does seem like there are some “rules” that people have to follow. Some people seem to decide where other people can beg and decide on who should use the sanitation facility first. By not being aware of these relations, it is likely that the help towards Roma is not accessible to all as initially intended. Internal hierarchy also has a link to migration and the aim of getting out of poverty. My findings suggest that those who started to migrate at an earlier stage are the ones with more power, as opposed to those that are new to Kristiansand. If one acknowledges that it is the “powerless” that have to beg outside of the main street and also those standing last in line to use the sanitation facility, there is a possibility to see beyond the group and try to approach Roma more as individuals, and not to generalize. This acknowledgement is important as we seem too often to end up with approaching groups of people. We often refer to minority groups as homogenous. However, just like Norwegians, immigrants are also different, and so are Roma. We often fail to recognize heterogeneity, to see that there may be an internal hierarchy and that some are discriminated against within their group. Power relations within the Roma population in Kristiansand are also important when links between discrimination, exclusion and poverty are to be discussed.

My findings indicate that the “powerful” have greater access to the different facilitations that have been put in place than the “powerless”. This may lead to further exclusion of those that already are marginalized. The discrimination that those with less power are faced with includes the order of the use of the sanitation facility and their placement in the city when assigned a place to sit and beg. The latter may have a direct consequence on their ability to generate income.

There are plenty of examples where aid has worsened conditions rather than improved them. That is why it is so important to get to know the group one is attempting to help. When efforts are put in place to improve the conditions of the people that are in Kristiansand, it is important to keep in mind that there might be internal power relations. The support system should make an effort to learn as much as they can about this hierarchy, in order to make sure that everyone gets the same opportunities. This is hard to figure out if they do not spend time with this group. What can be done to make sure that everyone gets the same opportunities regardless of their status within the group? How can one make sure that everyone gets access to facilities? If the support system only makes the powerful more powerful, and keeps the powerless at a

status quo, or even with less power, then this is a challenge that the support system should face sooner rather than later.

As previously discussed, some members of the Roma population have been in Kristiansand for several years. It is likely that these people will be familiar faces to the support system. It will therefore be crucial that the support system also is in contact with the newly arrived Roma. For instance, they should choose to visit Roma under the Vestervei-Bridge in order to give some food, see to it that the food is evenly divided between each family and each person that is here alone. My impression from Klingsheim was that this was something she recognizes as an important measure to secure the wellbeing of all.

The actors within the support system themselves perceive the sanitation facility to have worked as intended, and to a large extent that is true. However, when some Roma informants answer that there rarely is enough hot water, and that the internal hierarchy decides the order of when you can shower, this means that there are people that get to use this facility more than others. Thus, the facility has perhaps not worked as well in that sense. Despite of this, it seems like the overall experience has been good, and that the facility has some value to Roma in Kristiansand. There does not seem to be any limitation to the access to the toilet, and this is expectedly the most important factor about the facility.

Overall, the opportunities that Roma have been given in Kristiansand have led to some improvements, but if there are only some members of the population that have benefited then this will lead to even bigger challenges for those experiencing this new form of poverty. In some senses the new type of poverty is amplified when a group is excluded from the improvements that have been put in place for the benefit of Roma in Kristiansand. Even though there is still a way to go before the efforts towards Roma will secure all individuals the different measures that have been put in place in Kristiansand are measures not necessarily provided to them in Romania (Amnesty International Norway, 3 April 2012). When the majority of Roma informants replied that they do not perceive themselves as being discriminated against, this must be understood as a reflection of the treatment they have experienced in Kristiansand as opposed to in Romania. For instance, in Norway they are (so far) allowed to beg. Even though they have to register to do so in Kristiansand, the police leave them alone. There is a sanitation facility in place, provided for by the municipality in

Kristiansand and overseen by the support system. However Kristiansand has still a way to go, especially regarding accommodation.

Many of the informants in the support system stated that we cannot have a group of people who are this poor living in Norway without improving their lives, whether or not they live here permanently or more short-term. Norway's obligations towards the human rights and EU, as well as our moral obligations, mean that we should not accept that Roma people in Kristiansand have to live under a bridge when it is minus 10 degrees outside. If the municipality of Kristiansand interpret the law in such a way that they do not feel obliged to provide shelter, they should at least feel a moral responsibility to act.

The link between the lives of Roma in Kristiansand and the situation of discrimination and poverty they are faced with has to be acknowledged for several reasons. If, or when more measures are implemented, is it important to recognize that the status of Roma is due to several causes. However, it is a complex issue, and the answer to improving the lives of Roma is not clear cut whether it is here in Norway or in the countries of residence.

7.6 The intrusive poverty

When it comes to our commitment to follow the human rights however, it is not that complex to decide whether we should help them in Norway or in Romania. The people from the support system in Kristiansand voiced this quite clear: we cannot follow our obligations towards working for human rights for all only when it suits us and it is convenient. The poverty that we are faced with in the streets when Roma beg is intrusive and we experience poverty knocking on our door. Much of the debate related to how Norway should react towards Roma has to be linked to this intrusive poverty. Some people and politicians argue that we should close all of our borders for this group and to "do what we can" so that they are not able to beg. This argument supports a criminalization of poverty often aligned with arguments of security. It could quite easily also be linked to arguments of intrusion. We are better at helping poor people far away. Being faced with such poverty at our door-step makes many people uncomfortable.

The intrusive poverty however can also be met with the human rights approach. Those who argue against criminalization say that we should let the Roma people in and this way fulfill

our obligations through EEA and UN. Again we are faced with an ethical dilemma, and how we choose to interpret the laws and meet the Roma people may follow us for a long time. The history of how Norway has treated minorities in the past, particularly marginalized groups, should impact the authorities to implement initiatives to prevent this from happening again. The way many people talk about Roma, whether it is in social media or in real life, is a warning sign about what the future may hold. We need a discussion in Norway on what kind of society we wish to be. What we choose as our core focus is likely to also impact how we respond to Roma. We should ask ourselves if there are correlations between the laws and what we morally and ethically should do. What will happen if we ignore this group? Given the recent debate regarding begging, and whether or not it should be made illegal again, it is clear that the questions above should be asked. As a society and as people what will we lose by providing basic necessities to Roma and other people in similar situations, and what will we win by providing this? On the other side, what can we win by making begging illegal, and what will we lose? Perhaps we should reflect a bit on how we would want to be met if we faced the same challenges as the Roma people.

The fate of Roma in Norway may be sealed in the upcoming election in September 2013. There are two main groupings, and all though they are not completely unanimous, there is a great chance that this election will decide whether or not begging once again will be illegal. Considering this, it is important to look back at what impacted the politicians to remove the law that criminalized begging in the first place. If begging is made illegal, are there other measures that can be implemented so that it is easier for Roma to get a more traditional employment? There are plenty of jobs that Roma could do, therefore efforts should be implemented to provide employment opportunities and thus contribute to inclusion of the Roma people into the Norwegian society.

As discussed in the theoretical approaches, Roma who come to Kristiansand are experiencing severe material deprivation. A situation of poverty also reflected in the literature leading to important issues such as how to deal with the new poverty based on linkages between discrimination and exclusion of a people over decades. This deprivation and form of new poverty is very intrusive and might make us uncomfortable. There are strong links between lacking basic human rights, the new poverty, discrimination and migration. What the support system in Kristiansand acknowledges is that such links needs attention, and that to help this group – provide for their basic needs – is to participate in meeting their basic human rights.

Helping Roma improve their lives and increase their well-being should perhaps be the responsibility of the countries that the Roma people have citizenship in. However, as long as they currently are not facing this responsibility, Roma people will migrate to other countries in order to improve their lives. Norway is one of these countries. Rich countries in the western world should implement certain measures to improve the living standards of this group. They should also put more focus on assessing the support that has been provided to countries with a large Roma population in Europe. As was discussed in the literature review there is little evidence and knowledge about what this money has led to of support and increase in Roma welfare. Since Roma have migrated into many European countries, is it perhaps an idea that some of the money that has been provided for help in countries of residence, is used in the countries where Roma migrate to instead, like Klingsheim argued. That way, the authorities can see to it that the money reaches the target group instead of how the situation is now with little knowledge of the use of the money in the recipient countries. This money can provide for sanitation facilities, accommodation, employment facilities or other initiatives that will make a difference in Roma's lives.

What have been discussed in this chapter are the measures that have been implemented to support Roma in Kristiansand. The overall aim has been to understand the links between the needs of Roma as voiced by them, to see whether the support put in place correlates with these needs and to shed light on debates concerning Roma people in Kristiansand and beyond. In the next chapter I will summarize and conclude this thesis.

8 Conclusions

The main objective of this study was to explore the everyday life situation of the Roma people in Kristiansand as seen from both Roma's point of view and from the perspective of the support system working with Roma in Kristiansand. I have been concerned with the Roma peoples' perceptions of their life in general and while staying in Kristiansand. In particular I have highlighted whether Roma themselves experience discrimination. I have also been concerned with how organizations, the municipality and people in Kristiansand work towards Roma people to better a difficult life and to see how this support coincides with expressed needs of the Roma people.

Throughout my research I have been interested to find out about how and to what extent Roma are discriminated against. Getting such an understanding would be a good way into discussing future steps for reducing discrimination of Roma people.

In the following section this will be emphasised.

8.1 Potential causes for the discrimination

Roma people have been discriminated against for centuries. Their way of life has differed substantially from others' and Roma are met with much prejudice all over Europe and also in Norway. The discrimination of Roma people may be founded on the lack of knowledge about this group of people not only amongst members of the society, but in the society in general. This can potentially be caused by the notion that Roma do not have a common country. Another aspect is that Roma do not have one common language, but many different dialects and additionally no common religion (Madsen, 7 October 2010). All of these factors mentioned above are important to our identity, and that they are not that important to the Roma people, may for some be difficult to comprehend. It can be difficult to understand a group of people who seemingly do not see the same value in things like education and traditional employment as we do. They seem to be a people who like to be on the move and who prefer begging to work. And indeed many come here to beg, and then when they go back home to Romania, they spend the majority of their income on basic needs such as food and fuel, clothing for their children, and whatever they have left, they usually spend on improving

their houses (to a basic standard). They also invest in material goods that will improve their position in the Roma society and they spend money on having a big family party (Engebrigtsen, 2012, p. 38). Thus they are coming home spending their money and then coming back to beg for more. They do what they can to save money so that they can secure themselves and their families.

It is perhaps difficult also to understand that this people are not interested in a life like ours. At least that is the general perception. My findings indicate that some would like to have been included and live more stable lives - but that they find this difficult. That is not to say that they all would like such a life. Much research reveal that the cultural heritage of being on their way influence on Roma's choices, and that not being included is also a result of them not wanting to be included. Whether this is a result of an active choice or a result of years of discrimination and exclusion is hard to say. There are those arguing that Roma themselves are also to be blamed for the situation they are in. Kawczynski, the former president of Roma's national congress (cited in Johansen, 1995, pp. 26-28) points to that Roma should get rid of their "victim syndrome". As is pointed out, suppression does not only require a part to become the suppressor, but another part to become the victim. This "syndrome" appears in some of the attitudes that Roma have been claimed to have against *gaje* and the rest of the society they live in. This is a group of people that are only integrated to a very small extent and they have been able to keep the distinction between "us" and "them". This victimization of themselves can be seen as one reason as to why so few Roma are integrated well into today's society with traditional employment and housing. After centuries of discrimination and separation between "us" and "them" many Roma have potentially regarded themselves as inevitably being a "pariah caste" and when this is printed-into mind for centuries and generations it can be challenging to overcome.

It is often pointed out that being a beggar is "no job", that they are lazy and that they should find more traditional employment. So why don't they try? There are probably many explanations to this as lack of education, lack of relevant practical skills, lack of knowledge about the language, culture and other social aspects of the host-society can be challenging for immigrants to fully comprehend. Furthermore, in societies experiencing increased unemployment rates and increasing violence there seem to be a reappearance of misperceptions towards the Roma. Some may feel that minority groups will take the majority's jobs and that they threaten the identity of their society, whether it is the Roma

people or refugees from war-prone countries (Pedersen, 1996, pp. 44 and 47). Also in countries like Norway, presently experiencing stability, the presence of Roma people seems to invoke much debate. So why are we so offended by their presence? The answer to this question is not straight forward. But could it be simply that Roma beggars give us rich Norwegians a sense of guilt? We know that we are better off than most of the world, but to have people in our community who constantly remind us of our luck and fortune can result in emotions we did not expect. Perhaps the visibility of poverty which comes with Roma people who beg is too much to handle. One has to wonder when some people get so disturbed by Roma if this is because they remind us of how the world is outside of our own country.

Engebrigtsen (2012, p. 51) supports this by referring to our sense of shame. This shame of being wealthy amongst poor is further amplified when we refuse to give some money to a beggar. Consequently, if we give, we confirm this shame. Not everyone is prepared to make this realization, and thus, to generalize and be negative towards beggars becomes a type of coping mechanism. By replacing the image of poor people struggling to survive with seeing them as a group of criminals or con-artists, we replace our sense of shame with emotions such as irritation and anger. Thus, arguments that allow for a criminalization appear. These are also linked to debates of security and the possibility that this people are ruining our society and culture. Norwegian beggars and Roma beggars behave quite differently, the latter are more dramatic when begging, often both in body language and verbally. There are, thus, some cultural aspects here that may make it difficult for some Norwegians to understand the Roma people which is reinforced by the “pariah syndrome” that some Roma are acclaimed to have. Thus arguments to restrict begging and send them home flourish. However, such anger may also be interpreted in another way; that the presence of this group of people still has some sort of effect on us, and as humans we are likely to have these feelings. As long as this group continues to be marginalized and present in our society there is no escape.

Having said this, arguments for helping this people are also present in the debate and there are people advocating for providing services and including Roma into the overall society as I have argued in this thesis. There is an ever-lasting debate about how to best help people in need. Many argue that we should help them in the country where they originally come from. This is difficult when we are dealing with a group of people who live all over Europe and who in Romania are indeed an excluded and marginalised group of people.

8.2 Summary and concluding remarks

As I have attempted to show in this thesis there are several reasons why I perceive this topic of discrimination against the Roma people to be relevant for Development Management, including paying attention to poverty in a rich country and also a concern for human rights. In the literature review, which accounted for poor living standards, discrimination and policies implemented to reduce discrimination I have further expressed the importance of recognizing the challenges of this group, both in Europe, in Norway and in Kristiansand.

The choice of applying a qualitative research method in this thesis stems from the desire to understand the Roma people. A qualitative method was seen as the best way of understanding their perspective on their living standards and situation in Kristiansand. Through interviews I was able to talk to and try to grasp their views as well as the views of those supporting them. A larger survey with a larger sample could have provided a data set which would have been easier to generalize from. However, I argue that an approach based on a qualitative research strategy gave insights into issues of importance for an understanding of the Roma people in Kristiansand which can be relevant also beyond.

There are clear links between what I discussed in literature and theoretical approaches and my findings from the empirical chapters. We see the same trends of discrimination and exclusion when it comes to housing and employment as seen in Europe also in Kristiansand. This leads to a situation where Roma must be considered belonging to a category of the new poor. The ideas behind the thinking on new poverty are clearly linked with discrimination, migration and development. When choosing to migrate, poverty is further amplified for those that have to borrow money in order to come to Norway. Despite of this, people continue to come to Kristiansand. This tells us something about the situation where they come from, which thus can be perceived as worse than in Kristiansand.

The first research question on how Roma perceived their situation in Kristiansand was discussed in chapter 5, and what I found was that the lives of Roma people in Kristiansand is challenging, yet for many it is better than in Romania. The revenue from begging gives a much needed income that increases their abilities to send their children to school, buy food and to fix their homes. However, some shared that they have debt due to the journey from

Romania to Norway. The informants' motivation for coming to Kristiansand is to earn money to provide for families back home. However, many of them also expressed that they want to live in Norway because of the situation in Romania. However, there are challenges related to living in Kristiansand as well; this particularly refers to lack of accommodation and employment. Another challenge refers to being away from family back home. There are also plenty of stories of harassment, but the majority claim to not feel discriminated against. This can be explained in several ways, but the main cause might be that the majority of the informants have grown up with poor treatment and discrimination, and thus, the situation in Kristiansand is comparatively better than in Romania. I have discussed that there perhaps are pull factors which lead Roma people to Kristiansand since the support system here seem to be perceived as good. Despite of the services that have been put in place in Kristiansand, it is likely to assume that the push factors have impacted the most on the Roma's decision to migrate to Norway, and to Kristiansand in particular.

In chapter 6, the second empirical chapter, I dealt with the perceptions of the Roma situation as seen from the support system's side. What I found was that the support system perceive Roma's situation as challenging. They see a people that struggle and that are met with discrimination on several levels. Thus efforts to improve their situation while here have been argued for and some have been put in place. Particularly the sanitation facility and the welfare center at the Salvation Army are two efforts that have helped on Roma's situation by increasing their standard of living. My findings indicate that the support system seems to be satisfied with how the sanitation facility has worked with regards to the responsibilities of Roma. Having said this, my findings indicating an internal hierarchical system among Roma which also influences access to the sanitation facility, especially when it comes to showering using hot water should be looked into.

Kristiansand is sometimes portrayed as one of the better cities for Roma. The situation of things being perceived as better in Kristiansand might be impacted by the relatively smaller number of Roma and also the actual size of the city. However, the main reason is likely to be that the situation is seen as better here due to the responsibilities and efforts that have been implemented by the support system. The local authorities have also contributed with funding which have made this possible. I have argued that the motivation for the support system to work for increased living standards for Roma is a feeling of moral responsibility to help people in need. I have also discussed that the lack of indoor accommodation for Roma during

the winter time is morally challenging for the support system. When the situation with lack of accommodation during winter 2013 was solved through a private initiative the support system expressed relief. They perceive the situation of not being able to provide for accommodation to be unsatisfactory and urge the municipality to acknowledge the situation and take action. The support system perceives Roma to be discriminated against and do their best to include Roma and increase living standards. However, this perception of being discriminated against is also rooted in a structural discrimination, which goes beyond what individuals and organizations can do to help. This is linked to also seeing discrimination from the macro level. I have in this thesis referred to the human rights when discussing moral obligations towards Roma and with these in mind, the municipality in Kristiansand is obliged to provide for accommodation. The fact that they neglect to do so, may be seen as a further discrimination of the Roma people.

Based on my findings I will argue that the lives of Roma in Kristiansand are largely affected by the long term exclusion and discrimination many of them unfortunately have become accustomed with. The informants' low level of education and an often lacking work experience means that this people face challenges when it comes to housing and the ability to send their children to school. Even though much has been done in Kristiansand through the support system and with financial help from the municipality, there are still challenges. Private initiatives and attitudes are also of importance and despite incidents of harassment and the on –going discussions of how to get rid of the problem of begging in town, there are many examples from Kristiansand of people who see Roma as a people in need.

Roma must be seen as a group of people who experience exclusion and a situation of poverty. With reference to an overall debate on poverty and human rights the Roma community in Kristiansand, despite efforts put in place to help them get a better every-day life must be seen as discriminated against. We still face challenges when it comes to including this people. What I also found during my study was that this discrimination does not only have to be external, meaning from the Norwegian society, it can come from within the Roma community in Kristiansand as well. Some of the informants spoke about an internal hierarchy which impact on their well-being and every-day life; where they can sit and beg and the order of when they can shower were things mentioned. Such an internal structure has the potential to have a great impact on those with less “power” and thus impacting their experience of the efforts that have been initiated from the support system. However, it is in particular the

location for begging which influence on individual Roma's lives. Being situated outside the main street Markens decrease their possibility to generate money and will potentially lead to further exclusion. The impact that hierarchical structures has on some of the members of the Roma community in Kristiansand was an important finding as it gives further knowledge about the lives of Roma that are in the city.

The findings that are related to the use of the sanitation facility highlight why it is so important to not only involve the support system in evaluation processes, but also the users. When the municipality in May 2013 discussed whether or not to continue with the sanitation facility, the support system were involved in the process and got to share their experience. However, based on what I know, the Roma people themselves were not involved. Since this is the group that this service mainly is aimed at it is limiting that their opinions and experiences are not included. This is especially limiting considering the findings that are related to the periodic lack of enough hot water in the facility, which might have contributed to an increasing social divide internally in the Roma population. The support system did reveal some insights into internal hierarchy; it is however uncertain to what extent the support system is able to integrate this knowledge in their work towards the Roma community. It is important to acknowledge also these internal relations when deciding on what steps to make towards the Roma people in the future.

The issue of discrimination is complex. Thus, this thesis alone cannot shed light on all relevant issues that impact the living standards of Roma. Further research and attention to the issue would therefore be of great relevance. This thesis aimed to contribute to more knowledge about the living standards of Roma people and the effects of long-term discrimination in a particular place; seen from both sides, the Roma themselves and the perspectives of the situation from the point of view of the support system. The implemented efforts have also been identified and given an increased knowledge about strategies towards Roma people and the efforts put in place to prevent discrimination in Kristiansand. Based on the findings from Kristiansand it is possible to shed some light on the overall debate on how to best implement measures towards Roma not only in Kristiansand but also in other places.

As the literature review shows, discrimination and exclusion of Roma is widespread and is in many aspects deeply rooted. Since Romania became part of the Schengen agreement an increasing number of Roma people from particularly Romania have migrated to the richer

parts of Europe, including Norway in order to beg. The focus on Roma people has in the past been somehow limited, but it is possible that their increasing presence in Norway can lead to more focus and a genuine desire to improve their living standards. Efforts need to be implemented to reduce discrimination at all levels, and efforts have to be made to improve Roma's living standards while they are in Norway. In order for such improvements to be sustainable it is important to get an understanding of their situation highlighting their own perceptions. It is also imperative when aiming at improving lives of poor people that they are included in the process. I find it to be crucial that Roma themselves are included in the process of evaluation, identification and implementation of efforts to improve their living standards. To involve Roma could also contribute to self-management and sustainability, which should be two of the ultimate goals for development.

The hope is that this thesis can contribute to improve the understanding of the Roma people and their issues, as well as an identification of the steps that have worked and what efforts should be implemented to reduce discrimination and to improve the status of Roma people in Kristiansand and beyond. Norway is obliged to follow the UN in their work on human rights. It is these obligations that should be the foundation of guidelines on how to provide certain basic necessities to people that are in the country. The human rights discourse should also be the foundation for a reflection amongst the Norwegian people and within the state apparatus on how we want to meet people suffering hardship in our own country.

List of references

- Amnesty International, 26 January 2010. *Treated like waste— Roma homes destroyed, and health at risk, in Romania*. AI Index: EUR 39/001/2010. London: Amnesty International Publications, p. 2.
- Amnesty International Norway, 3 April 2012. *Slik lever romfolket i Europa*. [online] Available at <http://www.amnesty.no/aktuelt/flere-nyheter/romfolket-i-europa-diskriminert-og-trakassert/slik-lever-romfolket-i-europa> [Accessed 22 May 2013].
- Amnesty International Norway, 16 July 2012. *Romfolk blir diskriminert og trakassert*. [online] Available at <http://www.amnesty.no/aktuelt/flere-nyheter/romfolk-blir-diskriminert-og-trakassert> [Accessed 1 September 2012].
- Arbeidsdepartementet, 2001. St. melding nr. 55 (2000-2001); Om samepolitikken. [online] Available at <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/ad/dok/regpubl/stmeld/20002001/stmeld-nr-55-2000-2001-/2.html?id=195310> [Accessed 2 November 2012].
- Bhuller, M. and Aaberge, R., 2010. *Vedvarende økonomisk fattigdom blant innvandrere: en empirisk analyse for perioden 1993-2007*. [pdf] Oslo/ Kongsvinger: Statistics Norway. Available at http://www.ssb.no/emner/05/01/rapp_201032/rapp_201032.pdf [Accessed 4 January 2013].
- Brattvåg, H., 2007. *Folk fra Romania som tigger i Oslo*. [pdf] The Church City Mission's project «Rett i Koppen». Available at <http://www.bymisjon.no/PageFiles/16323/Folk%20fra%20Romania%20som%20tigger%20Oslo.pdf> [Accessed 28 November 2012].
- Bryman, A., 2008. *Social Research Methods*, 3rd. edition. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

- CIA World Factbook, 7 May 2013. *Romania: Economy*. [online] Available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ro.html> [Accessed 26 May 2013].
- Council of Europe, June 2011. *Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*. [pdf] Strasbourg. Available at http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/FAD/Vedlegg/SAMI/Nasjmin/Europaradets_3_rapport_Norge_2011.pdf [Accessed 14 November 2012].
- Council of Europe, February 2012. *Human Rights of Roma and Travellers in Europe*. [pdf] Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing. Available at http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/source/prems/prems79611_GBR_CouvHumanRightsOfRoma_WEB.pdf [Accessed 19 December 2012].
- De Haan, A. and Yaqub, S., 2009. *Migration and Poverty. Linkages, Knowledge Gaps and Policy Implications*. [pdf] UNRISD: Social Policy and Development Programme, Paper Nr. 40. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/922m6s8> [Accessed 30 October 2012].
- De Haas, H., 2010. Migration and Development: a Theoretical Perspective. *International Migration Review (IMR)*, 44(1). University of Oxford.
- De Haas, H., 2008. *Migration and Development: a Theoretical Perspective*. [pdf] University of Oxford, Working papers, paper 9. Available at <http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/pdfs/imi-working-papers/WP9%20Migration%20and%20development%20theory%20HdH.pdf> [Accessed 18 May 2013].
- Decade of Roma Inclusion, n. d. *About*. [online]. Available at <http://www.romadecade.org/about> [Accessed 6 October 2012].
- EEA grants- Norway grants n. d. *Improving conditions for the Roma*. [online] Available at <http://www.eeagrants.org/id/3176> [Accessed 7 November 2012].
- Engebrigtsen, A. I., 2007. *Exploring Gypsiness. Power, Exchange and Interdependence in a Transylvanian Village*. Oxford, New York: Bergham Books.

Engebrigtsen, A. I., 2012. *Tiggerbander og kriminelle bakmenn eller fattige EU-borgere? Myter og realiteter om utenlandske tiggere i Oslo*. [pdf] NOVA note, no. 2. Available at http://www.nova.no/asset/5541/1/5541_1.pdf [Accessed 28 December 2012].

Europabevegelsen, 30 August 2010. *Strid om penger til Europas Sigøynere*. [online] Available at <http://www.europabevegelsen.no/Nyhetsarkiv/Forbruker-rettigheter-og-personvern/Strid-om-penger-til-Europas-sigoeynere> [Accessed 7 October 2012].

European Commission, 2010. *Improving the tools for the social inclusion and non-discrimination of Roma in the EU*. [pdf] Budapest: European Roma Rights Center. Available at <http://www.errc.org/cms/upload/file/improving-the-tools-for-the-social-inclusion-and-non-discrimination-of-roma-in-the-eu-2010.pdf> [Accessed 10 November 2013].

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights [FRA], 2009. *European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey [EU-MIDIS]*. Data in Focus Report: The Roma. [pdf] Available at http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/413-EU-MIDIS_ROMA_EN.pdf [Accessed 29 September 2012].

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights [FRA], October 2009. *Housing discrimination against Roma in selected EU Member States: An analysis of EU-MIDIS data*. [pdf] Conference edition. Available at http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/607-Roma-Housing-Analysis-EU-MIDIS_en.pdf [Accessed 14 October 2012].

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights [FRA], November 2009. *The Situation of Roma EU citizens moving to and settling in other EU Member States*. [pdf] Available at http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/705-Roma_Movement_Comparative-final_en.pdf [Accessed 15 November 2012].

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights [FRA], March 2010. *Summary Report: The State of Roma and Traveller Housing in the European Union, Steps Towards Equality*. [pdf] Luxembourg: Publications office of the European Union, 2010. Available at

http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/786-ROMA-HOUSING-SUMMARY_EN_Web.pdf [Accessed 10 December 2012].

Fornyings-, Administrasjons- og Kirkedepartementet, n. d. a. *Grunnlaget for politikken overfor nasjonale minoriteter*. [online] Available at http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/fad/tema/nasjonale_minoriteter/midtspalte/grunnlaget-for-politikken-overfor-nasjon.html?id=444285 [Accessed 2 November 2012].

Fornyings-, Administrasjons- og Kirkedepartementet, n. d. b. *Nasjonale minoriteter*. [online] Available at http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/fad/tema/nasjonale_minoriteter.html?id=1404 [Accessed 2 November 2012].

Fundacion Secretariado Gitano Health Area, 2009. *Health and the Roma Community, analysis of the situation in Europe*. [pdf] Available at http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma_health_en.pdf [Accessed 16 May 2013]. P. 18.

Færaas, A., 31 October 2012. *Hevder mange av romfolket er mentalt syke på grunn av incest*. [online] Available at <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/Hevder-mange-av-romfolket-er-mentalt-syke-pa-grunn-av-incest-7032696.html> [Accessed 2 January 2013].

Hyde, A., 31 March 2006. *Systemic exclusion of Roma from Employment*. [online] Budapest: European Roma Rights Center [ERRC]. Available at <http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2535> [Accessed 26 May 2013]

Johansen, J. O., 1995. *Folket som ingen vil ha*. Aschehoug & Co, Oslo.

Journalen, 10 September 2012. *Mener romfolket har krav på beskyttelse*. [online] Available at <http://journalen.hioa.no/journalen/Innenriks/article83681.ece> [Accessed 2 November 2012].

Lee, E. S., 1966. *A theory of migration*. [pdf] Available at <http://www.students.uni-mainz.de/jkissel/Skripte/Lee.pdf> [Accessed 18 May 2013].

- Madsen, M. B., 7 October 2010. *Vet lite om romfolk*. [online] Available at <http://www.forskning.no/artikler/2010/september/266616> [Accessed 1 September 2012].
- NRK (Norsk rikskringkasting AS), 25 April 2012. *Tiggerne får dusj og toalettbygg*. [online] Available at http://m.nrk.no/artikkel.jsp?art_id=1.8102527 [Accessed 25 May 2012].
- NRK (Norsk rikskringkasting AS), 10 September 2012. *EU ber Bosnia stanse diskriminering av romfolk og jøder*. [online] Available at <http://www.nrk.no/nyheter/verden/1.8316221> [Accessed 15 November 2012].
- OHCHR (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights), n. d. *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*. [online] Available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx> [Accessed 3 May 2012].
- OHCHR (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights), 2006. *Frequently Asked Questions On A Human Rights-Based Approach To Development Cooperation*. [pdf] New York and Geneva. Available at <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FAQen.pdf> [Accessed 30 October 2012].
- Oxford Dictionaries, n. d. a. *Oxford Dictionaries Online*. [online] Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available at <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/discrimination> [Accessed 10 September 2012].
- Oxford Dictionaries, n. d. b. *Oxford Dictionaries Online* [online] Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available at <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/power?q=power> [Accessed 31 May 2013]
- Pedersen, M. K., 1996. *Sigøjnere- etniske minoriteter*. Ørbæk: Forlaget Tommeliten Aps.
- Regjeringen.no, 2009. *Action Plan to Promote Equality and Prevent Ethnic Discrimination*. [pdf] Available at <http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/BLD/etnisk%20disk/HPL/4043-materie-engelsk-trykk.pdf> [Accessed 18 November 2012].

- Renzi, L., 2010. *Roma People in Europe: A Long History of Discrimination*. [pdf] In European Social Watch Report 2010. Amnesty International Italy. Available at http://www.socialwatch.eu/wcm/documents/Roma_a_long_history_of_discrimination.pdf [Accessed 20 October 2012].
- Rroma.org, n. d. a. *Rroma History*. [online] Available at <http://www.rroma.org/rroma-history/> [Accessed 20 October 2012].
- Rroma.org, n. d. b. *Rroma Traditions*. [online] Available at <http://www.rroma.org/rroma-traditions/> [Accessed 20 October 2012].
- Rroma.org, n. d. c. *The Rroma*. [online] Available at <http://www.rroma.org/the-rroma/> [Accessed 24 April 2013].
- Rroma.org, n. d. d. *Rroma Population*. [online] Available at <http://rroma.org/the-rroma/rroma-population.html> [Accessed 2 June 2013]
- Ryen, A., 2002. *Det kvalitative intervjuet: Fra vitenskapsteori til feltarbeid*. Bergen: Fagbokforlaget Vigmostad & Bjørke AS.
- Senter for studier av Holocaust og livssynsminoriteter (HL-Senteret), October 2011. *Norske rom*. [online] Available at <http://www.hlsenteret.no/kunnskapsbasen/livssyn/minoriteter/norske-rom/norske-rom-> [Accessed 21 November 2012].
- Senter for studier av Holocaust og livssynsminoriteter (HL-Senteret), May 2012. *Antisemittisme I Norge? Den norske befolkningens holdninger til jøder og andre minoriteter*. [pdf] Oslo. Available at http://www.hlsenteret.no/publikasjoner/HL_Rapport_2012_web.pdf [Accessed 9 November 2012].
- Statistisk Sentralbyrå [SSB], n. d. 5 *Netto innvandring, etter land. 1966- 2011*. [online] Available at <http://www.ssb.no/a/kortnavn/innvutv/tab-2012-05-11-05.html> [Accessed 3 April 2013].

Statistisk Sentralbyrå, [SSB], 25 April 2013a. *Immigrants and Norwegian-born to immigrant parents*, 1 January 2013. [online] Available at <http://www.ssb.no/en/innvbef> [Accessed 25 May 2013].

Statistisk Sentralbyrå[SSB], 25 April 2013b. *Immigrants and Norwegian-born to immigrant parents*, table: 05184: immigrants, by sex and country background. [online] Available at <https://www.ssb.no/statistikkbanken/SelectVarVal/Define.asp?MainTable=InnvUNoBakgr2&KortNavnWeb=innvbef&PLanguage=1&checked=true> [Accessed 25 May 2013].

Statistisk Sentralbyrå [SSB], 14 May 2013. *Folkemengd og kvartalsvise befolkningsendringer, 1. kvartal 2013*. [online] Available at <http://www.ssb.no/befolkning/statistikker/folkendrkv/kvartal/2013-05-14?fane=tabell&sort=nummer&tabell=112359> [Accessed 1 June 2013].

The World Bank, 2010. *Economic Costs of Roma Exclusion*. [online] Available at <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/EXTROMA/0,contentMDK:22526807~pagePK:64168445~piPK:64168309~theSitePK:615987,00.html> [Accessed 20 December 2012].

UN (United Nations), n. d. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Preamble*. [online] Available at <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a11> [Accessed 7 October 2012].

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), n. d. *Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)*. [online] Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/mpi/> [Accessed 25 May 2013].

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), 2010. *Human Development Reports; Origins of the Human Development Approach*. [online] Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/humandev/origins/> [Accessed 30 October 2012].

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), 24 May 2012. *The Situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States- Survey Results at a Glance*. [online] Available at

<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/poverty-reduction/the-situation-of-roma-in-11-eu-member-states---survey-results-at.html> [Accessed 6 October 2012].

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), 2013. *International Human Development Indicators: Norway*. [online] Available at <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/nor.html> [Accessed 25 May 2013].

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), n. d. *Social and Human Sciences: Poverty*. [online] Available at <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/poverty/> [Accessed 2 May 2013].

Willgoths, S., 19 July 2012. *Forfølges over hele Europa. Klassekampen*. [online] Available at <http://www.klassekampen.no/60457/article/item/null/forfolges-over-hele-europa> [Accessed 15 November 2012].

Weyrauch, W. O. and Bell, M. A., 1993. Autonomous Lawmaking: The Case of the “Gypsies”. In: W. O. Weyrauch, ed., 2001. *Gypsy Law: Romani Legal Traditions and Culture* University of California Press. Ch. 2.

Wolfensohn, J. D. and Soros, G., n. d. a. *Why Roma Matter?* [online] Available at <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/EXTROMA/0,,contentMDK:20326736~menuPK:678858~pagePK:64168445~piPK:64168309~theSitePK:615987~isCURL:Y,00.html> [Accessed 25 May 2013].

Wolfensohn, J. D. and Soros, G., n. d. b. *Roma People in an Expanding Europe*. [online] Available at <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/EXTROMA/0,,contentMDK:20341647~menuPK:648308~pagePK:64168445~piPK:64168309~theSitePK:615987,00.html> [Accessed 24 May 2013].

Aalandslid, V. and Østby, L., 20 September 2007. Samfunnsspeilet 2007/4: Få har mange, mange har få. [online] Statistics Norway [SSB]. Available at <http://www.ssb.no/befolkning/artikler-og-publikasjoner/faa-har-mange-mange-har-faa> [Accessed 25 May 2013].

Appendices

Appendix 1

List of Roma informants		
Interview number	Fictive name	Age
Interview 1	Jonathan	47
Interview 2	Gregor	48
Interview 3	Luca	26
Interview 4	Eric	26
Interview 5	Ibrahim	30
Interview 6	Miriam	27
Interview 7	Don	25
Interview 8	Christian	28
Interview 9	Cornelius	60
Interview 10	Maria	45
Interview 11	Arianna	25
Interview 12	Roberta	38
Interview 13	Erika	28
Interview 14	Lisa	52
Interview 15	Gloria	27
Interview 16	Violeta	28
Interview 17	Lydia	23
Interview 18	Martin	18
Interview 19	Christopher	35
Interview 20	Jon	18
Interview 21	Robert	23
Interview 22	Adam	25
Interview 23	Anna	58
Interview 24	Thomas	38

Appendix 2

List of informants from the support system			
Interview number	Name	Organization/Party/Private	Interview type
1	Kari Klingsheim	The Salvation Army	Traditional
2	Kolbjørn Gunnarson	The City Mission	Traditional
3	Christofóros Schuff	Greek Orthodox Church	Traditional
4	Dag Vige	Political party Venstre	Telephone and e-mail
5	Aud Sunde Smemo	The Church of Norway	E-mail
6	Erik	Private initiative	Telephone
7	Jonas	Private initiative	Traditional

Appendix 3

Interview guide: the Roma people	
Interview questions	Follow-up questions
1. Could you please tell me about yourself?	Age, civil status, number of children, educational level, who do you provide for? Where is your family?
2. Have you been to Kristiansand before?	If yes, how many times? For how long have you been here now?
3. What is the most challenging aspect about being here?	For instance; missing your family, the cold, how you are treated, struggling to get enough money
4. How much money do you on average earn in a day?	What can you do, and what do you do with this money?
5. How are you treated in Kristiansand compared to where you come from?	
6. Have you ever experienced harassment in Kristiansand?	Have you had trouble entering shops etc.? Is there a difference if you enter alone or with others?
7. Do you feel discriminated against in your home-country or home-town?	If yes, how are you discriminated there?
8. Are you informed of policies and programs that aim to help you?	Have you used these programs?
9. Has the portable toilet and shower that was set up made any difference for your daily life here in Kristiansand?	Has it been accessible to all?
10. Have you experienced any acts of goodness?	Such as people giving clothes or food?
11. How do you see your future? And what are your aspirations and dreams?	
12. Have you ever felt mistreated or discriminated against because you are Roma?	
13. Has your life changed in any way since you came to Norway?	
14. Did you have to pay anyone to get to Norway?	

Appendix 4

Qualitative interview guide: Christian organizations	
Interview questions	Follow-up questions
1. What kind of offer does your organization have for Roma people?	
2. Do you see that this makes a difference in their lives?	
3. How are the lives of Roma in Kristiansand?	What do you know of the living situation for Roma in Kristiansand?
4. What about in the home countries, what do you know about their lives there?	
5. What kind of challenges, if any, have you faced in your work with Roma people?	
6. What are your thoughts on that accommodation for the coldest periods is not offered?	Why do you think this is?
7. What do you think it takes before Roma are offered somewhere to sleep when it is cold?	
8. What do you think that the authorities should offer to improve the living standards for Roma people?	
9. Is there anything that Roma themselves can do to change the perception that many have of them?	
10. The Roma people often seem to fall between different categories, like for instance work immigrants with relation to rights. This may lead to exclusion, why do you think this could be?	
11. There is little research and statistics on the Roma people and their living standards in Norway, do you have any thoughts on the potential causes for this?	
12. When it comes to discrimination, how widespread is it?	Do you have any examples of discrimination or harassment?
13. Do you know the average daily income for Roma?	How are these money spent?
14. The sanitation facility was placed in August 2012, how has it worked?	
15. It might seem like the reactions against the Roma people have been milder in Kristiansand than Oslo, do you agree with this impression?	If yes, do you have a theory of why that is? Is it possible that measures such as the sanitation facility have contributed to this?

Appendix 5

Qualitative interview guide: Father Christofóros Schuff	
Interview questions	Follow-up questions
1. How did you get engaged in the Roma people?	
2. What types of offers exists for Roma in Kristiansand?	
3. You have offered employment services, what is the feedback and how has it worked?	For instance access to work, satisfaction with the work.
4. How are the lives of Roma people in Kristiansand?	
5. How do they live in their home countries?	
6. Is your impression that everyone who comes to Norway has the same intentions and the same needs, or does someone to exploit the situation?	
7. What about crime? Several people claim that there are criminal facilitators; is that an impression you agree or disagree with based on the people you have met?	
8. What kind of challenges, if any, have you faced in your work with the Roma people?	
9. What can the authorities do to improve the standards for Roma?	
10. Is there anything Roma themselves can do to change the impression that some people have about Roma?	
11. The Roma people often fall between different categories, such as work immigrants and minorities. This may increase the chances of exclusion. What can this result from?	
12. When we see that there are challenges related to which category to see Roma under, it makes you wonder if the Norwegian laws and system is not completely updated on Europe today. What is your position to this?	
13. When it comes to discrimination, how widespread do you think it is?	Do you have any examples of harassment or discrimination?
14. What is the average daily income for	How are these money spent?

Roma in Kristiansand?	
15. In August 2012 the sanitation facility was placed, how has it worked?	
16. In your perception, does Kristiansand stand out in any way in how they have reacted to the Roma people in Kristiansand?	What may this potential difference come from? Could the sanitation facility make an impact here?

Appendix 6

Qualitative interview guide: Politician Dag Vige	
Interview questions	Follow-up questions
1. Why are you concerned with the Roma people?	
2. What do you know/ how do you think Roma live in Kristiansand?	Do you know the Roma people?
3. What kind of measures have politicians and the municipality implemented to help Roma people?	
4. In your opinion, has the sanitation facility worked as intended?	
5. Has there been anything negative?	
6. Are you considering other measures for the Roma people in Kristiansand?	
7. How do you feel that Roma people do not have housing in the coldest nights?	Why do you think they have not been given the offer of indoor accommodation?
8. What is your perspective on what the authorities should offer Roma?	
9. On the other side, what should Roma themselves do?	
10. Are the offers for Roma sufficient today?	
11. There is little research and statistics on Roma people and their living standards, what do you think causes this?	
12. The Roma people often fall between different categories, such as work immigrants and minorities. This may increase the chances of exclusion. What can this result from?	
13. When we see that there are challenges related to which category to see Roma under, it makes you wonder if the Norwegian laws and system is not completely updated on Europe today. What is your position to this?	
14. Should the state and the municipalities take some of the responsibility to ensure that discrimination against Roma is reduced?	If yes, how should this happen? If not, then why not? Who should have the “responsibility”?
15. When new Roma arrive to Kristiansand, are there any bodies who inform of laws, rights and opportunities?	For instance related to safety, threats, garbage and registration?
16. New beggars in Kristiansand have to register, how does this work and how is	

this followed up?	
17. What are your thoughts on whether or not Roma are discriminated against because of their identity as Roma?	
18. In your perception, does Kristiansand stand out in any way in how they have reacted to the Roma people in Kristiansand?	What may this potential difference come from?